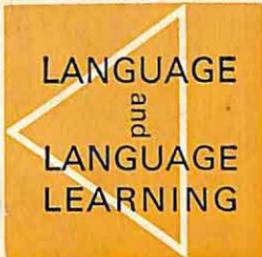


L. A. HILL



# Selected Articles on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language

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LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

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## Preface

I began teaching English as a foreign language in 1939, in a remote corner of Greece. Although English was my mother tongue, I was surprised and worried to find how little I knew about it—and just as surprised and worried to discover that the fact that it *was* my mother tongue did not automatically mean that I could teach it to others.

Gradually I began to learn by trial and error (a colleague once said, very truly, that we had learnt to teach English over the mangled bodies of our first batches of students).

Then, in 1947, I had to begin training teachers of English in Iran. There is no better way of learning a subject than having to teach it to others, and those patient teachers who came to my classes so faithfully (bless them!) obliged me to learn more and more about the complications of the English language and about the problems of teaching it.

In 1955 I began training teacher-trainers in Indonesia, and at the same time ventured to write my first article for a learned journal (*English Language Teaching*).

In 1958 I went to India as the British Council's Chief Education Officer. There I travelled over almost the whole country, observing, lecturing, training teachers and advising.

Since 1955, I have had over 50 articles published in journals in Britain, the USA, Germany, India, China (Taiwan) and Japan. Some deal with the problems of the English language, and some with problems of teaching it as a foreign or second language. All are based on experience in developing countries.

I hope that the selected articles in this book will be of some help to teachers faced with problems similar to those that I came up against when I started teaching.

L. A. HILL

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## Noun-Classes and the Practical Teacher<sup>1</sup>

Nouns have been classified in a variety of ways: concrete and abstract; proper, common and material; collective and multitude; countable and uncountable; and so on. Some of these classifications depend on meaning (e.g. abstract and concrete) and some on distribution in the sentence (i.e. the positions the nouns can occupy; e.g. whether they can follow *a* or *much*; whether they can precede *is* or *are*; etc.). Awkward cases where a noun belongs to more than one class are often explained by the formula 'X is used as Y' (e.g. 'An abstract noun is used as a proper noun when . . .').

I suggest that for the foreign learner, only a classification based on behaviour in the sentence is of practical use: we can leave the problem whether *fire* is concrete or abstract, material or common, to the philosophers and physicists: what our students want to know is whether they may say *a fire*, *some fire*, *any fires*, *fire is . . .* etc., and if so, under what circumstances.

I ~~divide~~ nouns into nine classes on the basis of the positions they can fill in sentence-patterns. I do not claim that these are the only classes possible, but I believe they cover all cases the average student is likely to have to deal with in his first years of English. I omit 'telegraphese' and very low frequency or deliberately comic uses of English: e.g. in H6 in the table below, it would be possible for a comic 'cannibal' in a pantomime to say, 'There won't be much Joan left for me by the time the chief has eaten his fill of her!'

First, on page 3, are the test-frames<sup>2</sup> (1 to 6) I used for determining the noun-classes, and the test-nouns (A to I) I tried in the frames. In these, *s* stands for 'plus the plural sign (or morpheme),

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Language Learning*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Vol. IX, Nos. 3 and 4, 1959.

<sup>2</sup> These do not, of course, cover all possible frames, but only typical ones, chosen because of the contrasts they produce. For instance, *not much* in Frame 6 stands for *some* (/səm/), *any*, *little*, *a lot of*, *not much*, etc.

whatever it may be'; e.g. *These . . . s are good* can be *These boys are good*, or *These oxen are good* (*en=s*), or *These children are good* (vowel change from /ai/ to /i/ and suffix *ren=s*), or *These men are good* (vowel change from /æ/ to /e/=s), etc. 'x' means that the noun at the top of the column can fit the blank in the frame on the left.

Frame 1 separates Classes A/B/C/D/E from F/G/H/I;  
 Frame 2 then separates A from B/C/D/E;  
 Frame 3(a) and (b) separate B from C/D/E;  
 Frame 4 separates C/D from E;  
 and Frame 5 separates C from D;  
 3(a) also separates F/H/I from G;  
 5 then separates F from H/I;  
 and 6 separates H from I.

As a result, all nine test-nouns are seen to have different (contrasting) distributions,<sup>2</sup> which means that they belong to different classes as far as behaviour in sentences is concerned.

An examination of the nine classes will show that A, B, C, E, F and H can be treated as basic types, while D is a combination

<sup>1</sup> Note that the mere absence of a determiner (determiners are words like *a*, *the*, *this*, *my*, *John's*, *some*, *each*) is not enough to divide A/B/C/D/E from F/G/H/I: for instance, practically any noun except those in Class E can occur without a determiner after a preposition, as far as I have been able to ascertain (e.g. *The woodpecker taps rapidly on trunk* (Class A) or *branch* (ditto); *He arrived complete with team* (Class B) of *oxen*; *by car* (Class A). There are also numerous examples of the type *hat* (Class A) *in hand* (ditto); *foot* (ditto) *hard down on accelerator* (ditto). A/B/D/F/H can occur in . . . after . . .; e.g. *car after car passed*). And any class can appear in *Welcome*, . . . !

These are:

G	1	.	3a	.	.	5	6
I	1	.	.	.	.	5	6
H	1	.	.	.	.	5	6
F	1	.	.	.	.	5	.
B	.	2	3a	.	.	.	6
C	.	2	.	3b	4	5	.
D	.	2	.	3b	4	5	.
E	.	2	.	3b	.	.	.
A	.	.	3a	.	.	5	.

	A car	B team <sup>1</sup>	C cattle <sup>2</sup>	D <sub>1</sub> scissors <sup>3</sup>
1 ... is good				
2 The ... are good		x	x	x
3 (a) These ... are good	x	x		- <sup>6</sup>
(b) These ... are good			x	x
4 Good ... are useful			x	x
5 He/she/it is a/an ...	x	x		
6 Not much ...				x

	D <sub>2</sub> Portuguese <sup>4</sup>	E Azores <sup>5</sup>	F music	G coffee	H Joan	I Shakespeare
1			x	x	x	x
2	x	x		x		
3	x	x				
4	x			x	x <sup>7</sup>	x <sup>8</sup>
5	x		x	x		x <sup>9</sup>
6						

<sup>1</sup> A few other words with the same behaviour, taken from the letters A, B and C in M. West. *A General Service List of English Words* (Longmans), are *army, audience, band, bank, board, circle, class, club, committee, company, council, crowd*.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly *police, people* (except in the low-frequency sense of 'nation').

<sup>3</sup> Similarly *pincers, tongs, tweezers* (see O. Jespersen: *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles*, Vol. II, 5-73).

<sup>4</sup> Also *Chinese, Japanese, Sudanese* and other names of nationalities in *ese* (see O. Jespersen: *op. cit.*, 11-57). D<sub>1</sub> and D<sub>2</sub> have the same distribution, but D<sub>1</sub> has *s*, D<sub>2</sub> has not.

<sup>5</sup> Similarly *Antilles, Himalayas, Balkans, Hebrides* and other names of groups of islands and mountain ranges. Note that in E<sub>3(b)</sub>, *these* is not contrastive, but merely descriptive (i.e. it is not *These* (with considerable stress) *Azores*, as against *those*; but, e.g. *These* (without stress) *Azores are a pleasant place for a holiday*).

<sup>6</sup> This would produce *These \*scissorses are good!* (the asterisk marks a wrong formation).

<sup>7</sup> E.g. *My daughter is a Joan too!* It would be very unusual to talk about *These Joans*, so I omit this.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. *Although he may not be a Shakespeare, he is a very good dramatist.* I omit *These Shakespeares* (cf. footnote 7, this page).

<sup>9</sup> E.g. *We don't read much Shakespeare at our school.*

of A/C; G of A/F; and I of F/H. We can give names to our classes if we wish, provided we make it quite clear that they refer only to the ways the nouns pattern and not at all to meanings. I suggest the following names:

- A countable
- B collective
- C plural only
- E unique plural
- F uncountable

H unique/countable (where / means 'or sometimes').  
 Then, D is plural only/countable  
 G is uncountable/countable  
 I is unique/countable/uncountable.

It is not only the differences between classes that are important to the practical teacher: the similarities are also of significance. The fact that F/G/H/I can occur with 1, whereas A/B/C/D/E cannot, means that in the early stages it would be possible, if the teacher wished, to treat A to E as one class, following one 'rule', and F to I as another, following another. The way to do this would be to delay introducing patterns that split the unity of A to E, on one side, and of F to I, on the other. Similarly, at a somewhat later stage, C to E could be treated as one class, in contrast to A and B, until ~~one~~ was ready to differentiate between them.

Now, how could this classification be used to help students and teachers? (It would, of course, be out of line with modern ideas to teach elementary students a whole set of guides covering the uses of the nine classes, one after the other: such theoretical information would not give them a command of the language itself.)

Firstly, the teacher can see from the table and from footnote 1 on page 2 that some of the rules often given in textbooks are not really very adequate: for instance, if any, or almost any, noun can occur without article or other determiner (e.g. *by car, on trunk or branch, hat in hand*), the 'rule' that a countable noun must have *a/an* if it has no other determiner is not of much practical value as a general statement, although it may be a useful temporary guide at a given stage in the study of the language. Also, it can be seen that concrete and abstract nouns do not contrast with each other at any point; *stone*

and *virtue* belong to the same class—G. By consulting the table, the teacher can see how to avoid rash generalizations, which he may have to explain away later when a bright student (there always seems to be one in every class!) confronts him with an example of what he had said never occurs (e.g. the teacher may have said that uncountables never take *a/an*, and later that *coffee* is uncountable; the bright student then shows him, in an English book, 'I'll have a coffee, please.')

Secondly, the teacher can go through his textbook seeing what class each noun belongs to (*news*, for example is F, not D), so that he can prepare suitable drills and exercises for each class of noun. When he comes to the word *ice-cream*, for instance, he tries it in the test-frames and finds it belongs to Class G. He can then prepare sentences such as *Do you like ice-cream?*; *Please give me an ice-cream*; *We want three ice-creams*; *I don't want much ice-cream today* to show how the word patterns, and as the basis for drills and exercises.

Thirdly, the teacher (or the textbook writer) can decide what vocabulary items and—more important—what *meanings* of each vocabulary item, to introduce at each stage on the basis of their patterning. He may decide, for instance, to start his course with Class A words only (*car*, etc.). He could, if he wished, introduce words from Class B (*team*, etc.) at this stage, provided he did not employ the pattern of which Frame 2 is an example (*The . . . are good*). He ~~would~~ then be treating A/B as one class for the time being, and his pupils would not lose anything thereby: there would be no confusion. Similarly, he may wish to use words from Class G (e.g. *a coffee*, *two ice-creams*) at this stage. Here again, this could be done, provided he kept to the patterns which G shares with A.

If the teacher or textbook writer introduces Class G (e.g. *a coffee*, *two ice-creams*) at this stage, he will have the problem later, when he introduces Class F (e.g. *not much music*, *some* (/səm/) *bread*, *a little water*) of linking G up with F (e.g. *not much coffee*, *some ice-cream*). He may therefore prefer, in the early stages, to treat F/G as one class, instead of A/G. In that case, he will not teach G (*a coffee*, *two ice-creams*, etc.) in the first stage with Class A (*car*, etc.). Instead, he will teach *not much coffee*, *some ice cream*, etc., in the second stage with Class F (*music*, etc.); and leave *a coffee*, *two ice-creams*, etc., to later, when the contrast between A and F has become well established. These different orders of presentation are simply matters of strategy:

Teacher A, teaching students whose language is Y, may think one order more profitable, because of the nature of Y; whereas Teacher B, whose pupils speak Z, may find a different order more successful because of the way Z is structured.

Once the order in which the noun-classes are to be presented has been chosen, the teacher or textbook writer can work out guides for each stage. Here is one possible order of presentation followed by the relevant guides:

Stage	Step	Class	Frame	Examples
EARLY	1	H	1	This is John.
	2	A	5	This is a book.
	3	A	3(a)	These are books.
	4	B	{3(a) 5}	These are teams. This is a team.
	5	F	6	Some water.
		G	6	Some coffee.
		F	1	He is drinking water.
		G	1	He is drinking coffee.
INTER-MEDIATE	6	G	{5 3(a)}	Bring me a coffee. Bring us two coffees.
	7	B	2	The team are good.
	8	C	2	The cattle are good.
		D <sub>2</sub>	2	The Portuguese are good.
		C	3(b)	These cattle are good.
		D <sub>2</sub>	3(b)	These Portuguese are good.
		D <sub>1</sub>	2	The scissors are good.
	9	E	2	The Azores are good.
		D <sub>1</sub>	3(b)	These scissors are good.
		E	3(b)	These Azores are good. <sup>1</sup>
	10	C	4	Cattle are good.
		D <sub>1</sub>	4	Scissors are useful.
		D <sub>2</sub>	4	Very tall Portuguese are rare.

<sup>1</sup> See page 3, footnote 5.

Stage	Step	Class	Frame	Examples
LATE	11	<sup>1</sup> D <sub>1</sub>	1	Shakespeare is interesting. A silver scissors.
	12	D <sub>2</sub>	5	A good Portuguese.
	13	H	5	That little girl is a Joan too.
			5	We have several Joans in our school.
	14	I	5	He is a Twentieth Century Shakespeare.
				Shakespeares are rarer than Napoleons.
			6	We don't read much Shakespeare in our school.

## GUIDES

*Step 1.* Nouns are not qualified by anything (contrast, e.g. Modern Greek, where names of persons and places are nearly always preceded by the definite article).

*Step 2.* Names of persons or places are not qualified by anything (they are 'unique'). Other nouns ('countables') must be qualified by *a*, *an*, *one*, *my*, *yours*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*, *this*, *that*, or *the* (or any other determiner introduced up to or at this Step).

*Step 3.* As Step 2, but any noun which is not a name can be put in the plural. It can then be used without any determiner; or with one of the following: *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*, *these*, *those*, *two*, *three* and other numerals (and any other suitable determiners introduced up to or at this Step).

*Step 4.* Exactly as Step 3.

*Step 5.* So far, we have distinguished between two classes only, the 'unique' and the 'countable'. Now a third class, the 'uncountable', is introduced. The 'unique' class has capital letters, the 'countable' and the 'uncountable' usually do not (remember that our guides deal only with the situation up to the Step we have reached in each case). The 'uncountable' class differs from the 'countable' in not occurring with *a*, *an* or *one* (contrast Step 2) and

in not having a plural (contrast Step 3). In addition, it can occur without any determiner at all (e.g. in *I like music*), or with certain determiners that the 'countable' class cannot have: such are *some*, (/səm/), *any* (meaning 'an indefinite amount of': this is not the same as *any* meaning 'it does not matter which'), *much*, *little*, *a little* (not the same as *little* meaning 'small'), and any other introduced up to or at this Step.

Both the 'countable' and the 'uncountable' class differ from the 'unique' class in being able to occur with *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *our*, *their*, *this*, *that*. Both the 'unique' and the 'uncountable' class differ from the 'countable' in being able to occur with no determiner at all.

*Step 6.* Here, for the first time, we get examples of words belonging to more than one of the classes set up so far; or, if you like it better that way, of words moving from one class to another. I suggest that the best way to deal with this phenomenon, if you feel you must talk *about* it to your class instead of just teaching it by practice, is to set up a new class, corresponding to our Class G above, and to call it 'uncountable/countable', or 'sometimes uncountable, sometimes countable'.

The guides for the 'unique' class, the 'countable' class and the 'uncountable' class remain the same; but a new class is added which can occur either with no determiner; or with *some*, *any*, *much*, *little*, *a little*; or with *a*, *an*, *one* and in the plural; or with *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*, *this*, *that*. A noun of this new class behaves as 'countable' when you want to count it (e.g. *one ice-cream*, *two ice-creams*, etc.); and as 'uncountable' when you do not want to count it, but to measure it (e.g. *a lot of ice-cream*, *a little ice-cream*, *a litre of ice-cream*, etc.).

*Step 7.* Here, some of the nouns which have hitherto been treated as 'countable' are shown to belong to another class really, since they occur not only in the same environments as Class A, but also in some that Class A cannot occur in: it is possible to say *The crowd was noisy* and *The car was noisy*; but whereas we can say *The crowd were noisy*, we cannot say \**The car were noisy*. The plural verb is used with these Class B nouns when we are thinking of the 'collective' as being made up of individuals, so that the idea in our minds is of more than one doer of the action of the verb (when, for instance, we say *The team are playing well*, we are thinking of the goalkeeper playing well, and the two backs playing well, and so on). The singular verb is used when we think of the 'collective' as one single

unit, so that the doer of the action of the verb is one (e.g. in *The team is travelling by air*, we are thinking of the team as one, perhaps even travelling with one group ticket).

*Step 8.* Here a new class is introduced, a class of nouns without *s* that is used with a plural, not a singular verb (for the moment, we ignore D<sub>25</sub>, which is not so common as D<sub>22</sub>, 3(b) and 4).

*Step 9.* This Step brings in plural nouns with *s* which cannot be used as singulars without *s* (it would be best not to introduce at this stage such compounds as a *scissor movement* and a *pincer movement*).

*Step 10.* In Steps 8 and 9 we are introduced to a class of nouns (some with and some without *s*) which behave as plurals only. Here we are shown a difference between C/D on one side, and E on the other: 'Plural only' nouns which do not normally have a capital letter, or which have a capital letter and denote nationalities, may appear without determiner (e.g. *Cattle are useful*; *Very tall Portuguese are rare*); whereas 'unique plural' nouns which are names of places must have a definite determiner (nearly always they have *the*).

*Step 11.* This can be introduced whenever literature is started. It does not in any way change the guide given for 'unique' nouns in Step 2.

*Step 12.* Here we find Class D behaving as 'countables', which means that, whereas so far we have treated C/D/E as 'plural only', we now set up a new guide: Classes C/E are always plural; whereas Class D is usually plural, but can also be used as a countable singular; i.e. it is a new class of 'plural only/countable' nouns.

*Step 13.* Here we see that the class of nouns we have treated as 'unique' so far (H/I) can on occasions behave as 'countable' up to a point: our new guide is that a singular name of a person or place which has a capital letter usually has no determiner; but when we do not think of it as 'unique', but as belonging to a class, it can take the determiners *a*, *an*, *one*, and be put in the plural (e.g. when we say *My daughter is a Joan too*, we are thinking of all Joans as belonging to one subdivision of the class of girls—the subdivision with the name *Joan*, as against the subdivision with the name *Mary*, etc. When, however, we say *Joan is ten years old*, we are referring to one unique *Joan*). At this stage, the name of Class H/I can be changed to 'unique/countable'.

*Step 14.* Here the class of 'unique/countable' nouns is split into two: the names of writers, composers, etc., can sometimes be found treated as 'uncountable', whereas the names of other people cannot. This means that a new class is formed, a class of 'unique/countable/uncountable' nouns, which differs from the 'unique/countable' class in being able to appear with the determiners *some* (/səm/), *any*, *much*, *little*, *a little*, etc. (see Step 5). This can occur when *Shakespeare* (or whoever the writer or composer is) means 'of the works of Shakespeare (etc.)'.

We have now come to the end of this suggested order of presentation of noun-classes and of the guides I suggest could be used at each Step in this presentation. Here is a summary of the classes the students will know at each Step of this presentation:

Step	No. of classes known	Names of classes known
1	one	no name.
2	two	unique; countable.
3	two	ditto.
4	two	ditto.
5	three	ditto, plus uncountable.
6	four	ditto, plus uncountable/countable (formed by splitting G from F/G).
7	five	ditto, plus collective (formed by splitting B from A/B).
8	six	ditto, plus plural only.
9	six	ditto.
10	seven	ditto, plus unique plural (formed by splitting E from C/D/E).
11	seven	ditto.
12	eight	ditto, plus plural only/countable (formed by splitting D from C/D).
13	eight	ditto, except that unique changes its name to unique/countable.
14	nine	ditto, plus unique/countable/uncountable (formed by splitting I from H/I).

## Form-Classes and Sub-Classes<sup>1</sup>

In his book, *The Structure of English*, Professor C. C. Fries<sup>2</sup> mentions 'modifiers with a Class 1 word ("noun"/"pronoun") as head', and divides such modifiers into Class 3 words ('adjectives') and Group A words ('determiners'). Here is a general frame which includes all modifiers with a Class 1 word as head, but not cases of so-called 'apposition' such as *Mr Smith, our teacher* and *I myself*.

In the table which follows, the column headed X contains the Class 1 words, and the columns headed 1 to 17 give the sub-groups of the main group of modifiers of Class 1 words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
even	all	this	many	a	other	such
just	both	that	much	an	further	
only	half	these	few			
		those	little			
		my <sup>3</sup>	more			
		what	less			
		which	fewer			
		the	enough			
		some	one			
		any	two <sup>4</sup>			
		no	same			
		whatever	first			
		whichever	last			
		every	only			

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Language Learning*, Vol. VIII, Nos. 3 and 4, 1958.

<sup>2</sup> P. 207 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Also *your, his, her, our, their, John's, this boy's, our friends'*, and other so-called 'possessive determiners'.

<sup>4</sup> Also *three, four, twenty, forty-three, a hundred and fifty-eight* and other so-called 'cardinal numbers'.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		either neither each	best <sup>1</sup> second <sup>2</sup>			
8	9	10	11	X		12
a an	beautiful <sup>3</sup> good <sup>4</sup> better <sup>5</sup> best <sup>1</sup> first last only second <sup>2</sup> other further	a an	stone <sup>6</sup>	knight <sup>7</sup>		errant <sup>8</sup>
13	14		15	16	17	
here <sup>9</sup>	which you bought yesterday <sup>10</sup>		all <sup>11</sup> both <sup>11</sup>	each <sup>11</sup>	also <sup>11</sup> even <sup>11</sup> only <sup>11</sup> too <sup>11</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Also *worst, strongest, easiest* and other so-called 'superlatives' that do not consist of *most* + another word.

<sup>2</sup> Also *third, fourth, twentieth, forty-fifth* and other so-called 'ordinals'.

<sup>3</sup> Also *interesting, irritable* and other Class 3 words that do not add the *-er/-est* suffixes.

<sup>4</sup> Also *small, nasty, white* and other Class 3 words that add the *-er/-est* suffixes.

<sup>5</sup> Also *smaller, nastier, whiter* and other so-called 'comparatives' which do not consist of *more* + another word.

<sup>6</sup> Also *ivory, gold, brass* and numerous other words.

<sup>7</sup> Also other Class 1 words.

<sup>8</sup> Also certain other Class 3 words occurring in fixed expressions consisting of Class 1 word + Class 3 word, in that order (e.g. *Lords Spiritual, Lords Temporal, heir apparent, malice aforethought*).

<sup>9</sup> Also *in the garden, of the tree, shaving, lying in the street, bought from that shop, to open the door with* and many other modifiers of Class 1 words.

<sup>10</sup> Also *whom you have just met, you saw last week, who lives here* and many other modifiers of Class 1 words.

<sup>11</sup> These can be separated from the rest of the substantive expression they belong to by other parts of the utterance: e.g. *We (have) all (come); They (got one) each; John (was there) too.*

It should be noted that some words appear in more than one column: in such cases, the different columns they appear in represent alternative positions in which they can occur in a substantive expression. In most cases the meaning of the word is approximately the same whatever the column it appears in. An exception is *only*: in Col. 1 it has the same meaning as in Col. 17 (e.g. *I saw only my child*: *I saw my child only*); but in Cols. 4 and 9 a different meaning occurs (e.g. *I saw my only child*). I treat the *only* in Cols. 1 and 17 as a homonym of that in Cols. 4 and 9, whereas I treat the *only* in Col. 1 and that in Col. 17 as differently patterning varieties of the same morpheme, and the same with those in Col. 4 and in Col. 9. Cols. 9, 13 and 14 can be reduplicated: e.g. *a beautiful, little, old house*; *a lonely only child*; *the furniture here in our house*; *the man we met yesterday who stutters*.

It goes without saying that no one substantive expression would contain all the 17 columns: my aim has merely been to show relative positions and class membership. A list of mutual exclusions would be possible but very bulky.

Here are some examples of substantive expressions illustrating the order given in the above frame:

1 2 3 9 11 X	even all these beautiful gold watches
1 3 4 X	just these four books <sup>1</sup>
3 4 7 X	the first such people; my only such experience
4 5 6 7 X	many another such person
2 3 4 6 X	all these many further questions
4 6 7 X	many other such books
7 8 9 X	such a good boy
8 9 X	an only son; a last chance; a further attempt
9 10 X	so large a horse (9 is here modified by <i>so</i> )
10 X 12	a knight errant
3 4 X 12 13	the many Lords Spiritual residing here
3 9 X 13 14 15 16 17	the little boys beside the door who live near us all (got a balloon) each too. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The primary stress is on *books*. If it is placed on *these*, *just* becomes a modifier of the latter instead of modifying the Class 1 word *books*.

<sup>2</sup> *All* and *too* should be taken as modifying *boys* here.

On the basis of the above patterning, I came to the conclusion that modifiers of Class 1 words could be divided into 11 main sub-groups (abbreviated SG's in what follows), and that many of these could be further subdivided into sub-sub-groups (SSG's). My SG's and SSG's are as follows:

*SG 1. SSG (a): even, only; SSG (b): just; SSG (c): also, too.*

Members of this SG appear in Col. 1 or in Col. 17 in the above frame. SSG (a) can appear in either of these two positions; SSG(b) only in Col. 1; and SSG (c) only in Col. 17.

Examples: Col. 1: even I; only my brother; just some such man (as he).

Col. 17: (I saw) John even; the man in the blue raincoat only; John's brother also; (I saw) him too.

*SG 2. SSG (a): all; SSG (b): both; SSG (c): half.*

Members of this SG appear in Col. 2 or Col. 15. (a) and (b) can occur in either position, (c) only in Col. 2, (a) and (c) can be preceded by words that modify them (e.g. almost all; just half); (b) cannot.

Examples: (a) nearly all the boys; we all (came); we (were) all (present).

(b) both these trains; they both (saw it); they (have) both (come).  
(c) nearly half your marks.

*SG 3. SSG (a): this, that; SSG (b): these, those; SSG (c): my;<sup>1</sup> SSG (d): the; SSG (e): some; SSG (f): what, which; SSG (g): any, no, whatever, whichever; SSG (h): every; SSG (i): either, neither; SSG (j): each.*

Members of this SG appear in Col. 3. SSG (j): each, can also appear in Col. 16.

My test-frames for determining the SSG's of SG 3 were:

Test-frame	SSG's which fit the frame opposite
All—loaf	a c d
All—many loaves	b c d
(There is a big tunnel through)	
—middle of this mountain	d
—such fastener	e f g h i j
Only—such fastener (as this will do)	e

<sup>1</sup> See page 11, footnote 3.

Test-frame	SSG's which fit the frame opposite
Absolutely—such fastener (you would like would do)	g h
Absolutely—such fasteners (you would like would do)	g
We (were given one)—	j

As will be seen from the above, no SSG patterns identically with any other.

SG 4. SSG (a): many; SSG (b): much; SSG (c): few; SSG (d): little; SSG (e): more, less; SSG (f): fewer; SSG (g): enough; SSG (h): one; SSG (i): two;<sup>1</sup> SSG (j): same; SSG (k): first, last; SSG (l): only, second;<sup>2</sup> SSG (m): best.<sup>3</sup>

Members of this SG appear in Cols. 4 and 9. All can occur in Col. 4, but only SSG's (k) through (m) can occur in Col. 9.

Examples: Col. 4: all these many other people; many another such person; the best such essay; my only other such attempt.

Col. 9: another such second attempt; such a beautiful first baby; a spoilt only child.

My test-frames for the SSG's of this SG were:

Test frame	SSG's which fit the frame opposite
Very—such books	a c
Very—such ink	b d
A—such books	c
A—such ink	d
A lot—such books	e f
A lot—such ink	e
Quite—such books	a c g
Quite—such ink	b d g
The—such book	h j k l m
The—such books	i j k l m
By far the—such books	k m
Another—such books	c i
That terrible—child	k l m
The second—such book	m

<sup>1</sup> See page 11, footnote 4. <sup>2</sup> See page 12, footnote 2. <sup>3</sup> See page 12, footnote 1.

## SG 5. a, an.

This SG can occur in three positions: in Cols 5, 8 and 10.

Examples: Col. 5: many another such house.

Col. 8: such a beautiful house.

Col. 10: too expensive a gold watch.

When this SG appears in Col. 8, it is sometimes inserted between a word modifying a Col. 9 word and the Col. 9 word itself: e.g. rather a small house; not an easy question.

## SG 6. other, further.

This SG can occur in Col. 6 or in Col. 9.

Examples: Col. 6: many other such books; few further such instalments; another such book.

Col. 9: such a further instalment; the mysterious other world.

## SG 7. such.

This SG occurs in Col. 7.

Examples: even such people; all such people; some such people; many other such nice people; such a good man.

SG 8. SSG (a): beautiful;<sup>1</sup> SSG (b): good;<sup>2</sup> SSG (c): errant;<sup>3</sup> SSG (d): better.<sup>4</sup>

This SG occurs in Cols 9 and 12. Only certain lexical items in it can occur in Col. 12, but all items can occur in Col. 9.

Examples: Col. 9: such a beautiful gold watch; so warm a day.

Col. 12: an elderly Lord Temporal.

My test frames for the SSG's were:

Test-frame	SSG's which fit the frame opposite		
A much more—gold watch	a		c
Too—a watch	a	b	c
Knights—			c
A very much—watch	a <sup>5</sup>		d

SG 9. Stone.<sup>6</sup>

This SG occurs in Col. 11.

Examples: a beautiful ivory walking-stick; a small iron ring.

SG 10. here.<sup>7</sup>

This SG occurs in Col. 13.

<sup>1</sup> See page 12, footnote 3. <sup>2</sup> See page 12, footnote 4. <sup>3</sup> See page 12, footnote 8.

<sup>4</sup> See page 12, footnote 5.

<sup>5</sup> Only certain words from SSG (a) can occur here (e.g. *a very much maligned watch*).

<sup>6</sup> See page 12, footnote 6. <sup>7</sup> See page 12, footnote 9.

Examples: The boy beside the door who is wearing the cap; the man shaving; The Minister Plenipotentiary of Ruritania; a watch made of gold; the man to cut the grass whom you asked for.

SG 11. which you bought yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

This SG occurs in Col. 14.

Examples: the boys who helped us (will) each (get an apple): the boys waiting outside who live next door (will) both (ask the same question, I am sure); the eggs we bought direct from the farm (were rotten) even.

As mentioned above, my original general frame included modifiers of modifiers. Here are examples (the list is not exhaustive):

<i>Col. 1:</i>	not even	any more
	not just	somewhat less
	not only	two fewer
<i>Col. 2:</i>	not absolutely all	a quarter more
	not just half	what a lot less
<i>Col. 3:</i>	not even this	not just a very few more
	not quite that	a good lot too many
	not only my	(the) <sup>2</sup> very same
	not just any	very nearly (the) best
	not absolutely every	absolutely (my) only
	almost whatever	<i>Col. 9:</i> not so very much more beautiful
<i>Col. 4:</i>	not so very many too many	how very little less
	just a very little too much	troublesome
	a good deal too few	not a little more active
	rather too many	a good bit less appetising
	not so very many	somewhat more enterprising
	somewhat few	not too very difficult
	just enough	not so very much too expensive
	not quite enough	most unpleasant
	few enough (here <i>enough</i> modifies <i>few</i> )	not so very much better
	a good few	a good bit cooler
	not so very many fewer	(the) very best
	how much less	(my) very first
		<i>Col. 10:</i> not quite here

It will be noticed that there are hierarchies of modification in the above: in most cases the Class 3 or Group A word is on the right, and the word immediately modifying it is next to it on the left. Each word as one works back towards the left is usually found to be a modifier of the word immediately to its right.

<sup>1</sup> See page 12, footnote 10.

<sup>2</sup> *The* does not modify *same*, but the centre of the substantive expression (i.e. it is parallel to *same*): e.g. *the very same day*. Cf. *the* and *my* in the parentheses below.

## 3

## Position and Order of Modifier-Modifiers<sup>1</sup>

o. In my chapter on form-classes and sub-classes (pages 11 to 17, above), I gave some examples of what I call modifiers of modifiers, or modifier-modifiers. In this chapter I shall deal with these more fully.

### 1. Definitions

In what follows, centres (or heads) of expressions will be printed in ordinary type, modifiers in *italic type* and modifier-modifiers in **heavy type**.

1.1. Abbreviations: Centres of substantive and finite verb expressions (i.e. substantives and finite verbs) will be marked C. Modifiers of such centres will be marked M. Modifiers of M's will be marked MM<sub>1</sub>. Modifiers of MM<sub>1</sub>'s will be marked MM<sub>2</sub>, etc.

Example: **not** **so** **very many** **too** **many** *new* books.

MM<sub>6</sub> MM<sub>5</sub> MM<sub>4</sub> MM<sub>3</sub> MM<sub>2</sub> MM<sub>1</sub> M C

This shows that *new* modifies books, **many** modifies *new*, **too** modifies **many**, etc.<sup>2</sup>

1.2. Where an expression consists of more than one word, parentheses will be used to show where the expression begins and ends.

Example: **so** **strong** (**that it can't break**).

MM<sub>1</sub> M MM<sub>2</sub>

This shows that **so** modifies *strong* and that the expression **that it can't break** as a whole modifies **so**.

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Language Learning*, Vol. XI, Nos. 1 and 2, 1961.

<sup>2</sup> Those who prefer immediate constituent analysis can say that *new* modifies books, **many** modifies *new* books, **too** modifies **many** *new* books, etc.

1.3. No distinction will be made between free and bound MM's (i.e. the analysis will be morphemic).

Examples: *the most beautiful girl* and *the oldest girl*.

M MM<sub>1</sub> M C M M MM<sub>1</sub> C

Here *-est* modifies *old* in the same way as **most** modifies *beautiful*.

1.4. These last two examples also illustrate modifiers of parallel rank: *the* and *beautiful* (or *old*) are both M's; i.e. *the* modifies *girl*, not *beautiful* (or *old*).

1.5. Where a MM is separated from the expression it modifies, I use an arrow to show its connection with the latter.

Example: *almost the only other one*.

MM<sub>1</sub> M M M C  
↑

This shows that **almost** modifies *only*, not *the*.

1.6. In all cases where there is no arrow and there are two or more parallel expressions, the MM modifies the nearest M, or, if it is both preceded and followed by M's, the one that follows:

Examples: *a board red underneath* (here **underneath** modifies  
M C M MM<sub>1</sub>)  
*his (to me) incomprehensible jargon* (here **to me** modifies  
M MM<sub>1</sub> M C  
*incomprehensible*, not *his*).

## 2. Patterns

2.1. I distinguish five main classes of MM's: (a) **enough**; (b) other one word MM's (e.g. **very**); (c) MM's consisting of bound morphemes (e.g. **-er** in *bigger*); (d) MM's that are substantive expressions consisting of more than one word (e.g. *a lot*), or 'prepositional phrases'<sup>1</sup> (e.g. **by no means**); and (e) MM's consisting of more than one word that are *-ing* phrases, clauses, or phrases with *to* + infinitive<sup>1</sup> (e.g. *learning to read*, *where they meet the water*, and *to catch*).

2.2. I distinguish between three positions relative to the centre:

<sup>1</sup> I use traditional terminology here for convenience's sake.

(a) Pre-Centre (e.g. *very good* horses);

MM<sub>1</sub> M C

(b) Post-Centre (e.g. *shoes red underneath*);

C M MM<sub>1</sub>

(c) Pre- and Post-Centre (e.g. *the only house (to buy)*).

M M C MM<sub>1</sub>

2.3. The patterns I distinguish are given on the next four pages:

(a) through (e) refer to paragraph 2.1, above; a dash (-) means that the pattern does not occur; square brackets [ ] are used to enclose words which are extra to the pattern to be illustrated; parentheses around M's and MM's indicate that these are optional in the patterns concerned. (For parentheses around expressions consisting of more than one word, see 1.2, above.)

2.4. As will be seen, (a) and (c) occur only immediately after the M (or MM) which they modify and are the only MM's that follow the M (or MM) which they modify when it is in Pre-Centre position.

2.5. (b) occurs in Post-Centre position only when it is an afterthought (see under M + C + MM<sub>1</sub> in the table).

2.6. When (b) or (d) are in the Pre-Centre position, they always precede the M (or MM) which they modify.

2.7. Only (d) and (e) occur as MM<sub>2</sub>'s in Post-Centre position.

2.8. (e) always follows both the C and the M (or MM) which it modifies.

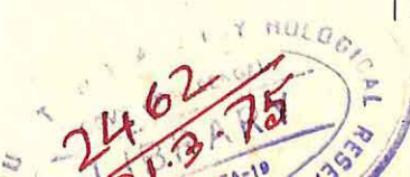
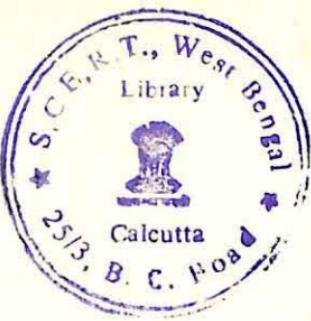
2.9. Only (e) occurs as MM<sub>3</sub> in Post-Centre position.

Pattern	Pre-Centre	Post-Centre	Pre- and Post-Centre
BEFORE $(MM_2 +), MM_1 + M$	$(MM_2 +) MM_1 + M + C$ (b) not very <i>good</i> horses (b) almost <i>all</i> people (b) swiftly <i>flowing</i> rivers (d) (in many ways) not so very much more relevant data (d) (by no means) <i>all</i> these books (d) [lis] (to me) incom- prehensible jargon (d) (a lot) <i>more</i> interesting stones	$C (+ MM_2) + MM_1 + M$ (b) apartments almost exactly <i>below</i> (b) the rocks quite ( <i>near where</i> <i>we live</i> ) (b) houses just ( <i>at the bottom of</i> <i>the cliff</i> ) (b) [the] peak <i>not so</i> very much ( <i>nearer than</i> <i>high one</i> ) (d) [they] go(a lot) <i>more</i> rapidly	

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 Date 21.3.75.....  
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<sup>1</sup>  $MM_2$  can be expanded to  $MM_3 + MM_2$ , or  $MM_4 + MM_3 + MM_2$ , etc.

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Pattern	Pre-Centre	Post-Centre	Pre-and Post-Centre
$(MM_2 +) \underline{MM_1} + M + M$ or $MM_2 + M + MM_1 + M$ (in each case, the first M is <i>a, an, the</i> )	$MM_1 + M + M + C$ ↑	—	—
AFTER $\underline{M + MM_1}$	$M + MM_1 + C$ ( <i>a</i> ) <i>good enough</i> teeth ( <i>c</i> ) <i>smaller</i> teeth	$C + M + MM_1$ ( <i>a</i> ) <i>rocks small enough</i> [ <i>to</i> <i>carry</i> ] <sup>1</sup> ( <i>b</i> ) <i>shoes red underneath</i> ( <i>b</i> ) <i>[a] shirt wet through</i> ( <i>d</i> ) <i>stones flat</i> (on top) ( <i>e</i> ) <i>boys slow</i> (learning to read) ( <i>e</i> ) <i>stones flat</i> (where they meet the water)	$M + C + MM_1$ ( <i>b</i> ) <i>all [the] books [were suit- able] nearly</i> ( <i>d</i> ) <i>[the] only shop (in our village)</i> ( <i>e</i> ) <i>[the] only house (to buy)</i>

<sup>1</sup> See page 21, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Note the difference between:

*easy enough (to open)* (i.e. rather easy to open), and *loose enough (to open)* (i.e. so loose that it can be opened).

$M \quad MM_1 \quad MM_2$

Pattern	Pre-Centre	Post-Centre	Pre- and Post-Centre
$M + MM_1 + MM_2$	—	$C + M + MM_1 + MM_2$ (a) men younger (than my grandfather) (e) rocks small enough (to carry) (e) [they] go faster (than ~ we/us/we do)	$M + MM_1 + C + MM_2$ (e) [the] best house (to buy) younger men (than my grandfather) (e) [the] fastest man (to run a mile) (e) faster runners (than ~ I/me/I am) (d) [the] smallest boy (in the class)
MIXED $MM_2' + M + MM_1$		$MM_2 + M + MM_1 + C$ (b) much bigger boats (d) (by far) [the] youngest boy	$C + MM_2 + M + MM_1$ [+ $MM_3$ ] (b) boats much bigger [(than mine)]

<sup>1</sup> See page 21, footnote 1.

Pattern	Pre-Centre	Post-Centre	Pre- and Post-Centre
$MM_1 + M + MM_2$	—	$C + MM_1 + M + MM_2$ (e) horses <i>too fast</i> (to catch)	$MM_1 + M + C + MM_2$ (e) as <i>big</i> [a] ship (as the other) (e) <i>too fast</i> [a] horse (to catch) (e) <i>so strong</i> [a] rope (that it can't be broken)
$MM_2 + M + MM_1 + MM_3$	—	$C + MM_2 + M + MM_1 + MM_3$ (e) boats <i>much bigger</i> (than mine)	$MM_2 + M + MM_1 + C + MM_3$ much <i>bigger</i> boats (than mine)

<sup>1</sup> See page 21, footnote 1.

## Time and Tense in English<sup>1</sup>

In talking with teachers of English in various parts of the world, I have found that rather a lot of confusion exists about the ways in which certain of the English tenses are used. In this article, I shall try to clear up this confusion.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Educational Forum*, Delhi, Vol. IV, No. 4, October 1959.

<sup>2</sup> Most tenses in English have several uses. For instance, the 'do/does' tense can show habit (as in 'He swims every day'), or real present time (as in 'I know what to do now'), or past time (as in 'As soon as the firing began, up jumps John and rushes for the door as fast as he can go'), or future time (as in 'We leave at dawn tomorrow'). In this article, however, I shall deal only with selected uses of tenses. Obviously one cannot teach all the uses of a particular tense at the same time; and if one tries to teach them one after another, lesson after lesson, one will find oneself teaching very common uses and very rare uses one after the other. This is against one of the most important principles of teaching, which is that one should teach what is most common and most useful first, and leave what is rare and not very useful until late in the course. For instance, one might introduce 'He swims every day' in the first year, 'I know what to do now' in the second, 'We leave at dawn tomorrow' in the fourth, and 'As soon as the firing began, up jumps John, etc.' in the sixth.

It is perfectly legitimate to encourage the first year student to associate the 'do/does' tense with habitual action without telling him about any of the other uses of this tense. (The 'do/does' tense is far commoner than the 'am/are/is doing' tense for showing real present time; but if one wants to start teaching English situationally, without using translation, one cannot escape having to use the 'am/are/is doing' tense in the first stages for real present time. One can then teach the 'do/does' tense for habitual action first, and introduce it later for real present time.) Then, in the second year, one can widen the student's knowledge by getting him to associate 'I know', 'he understands', 'we feel', etc. with real present time. Then in the fourth year, when one introduces 'We leave at dawn tomorrow', the student's knowledge is further widened by showing him that the 'do/does' tense can be stretched to cover future plus somebody else's intention, when the context requires this; and so on.

What happens, in fact, is that the student's knowledge grows, and as it grows the 'rules' he carries in his head, either consciously or unconsciously, are modified, just as they are in other subjects. (For instance, a geography student may first know the 'rule' that London is in England. As he advances, he will, however, probably learn

## 1. The tenses 'have done', 'did' and 'had done'

Many teachers seem to think that the 'have done' tense is used for recent past, the 'had done' tense for distant past, and the 'did' tense for a past which is neither recent nor distant.

This is quite wrong. I can say, 'I have been to Turkey' even if my last visit to that country was 20 years ago. I can also say, 'Ten seconds ago I opened the window and then sat down. When I sat down I had already opened the window.' In this utterance, I use 'had opened' even though the action was only ten seconds ago.

The difference between the 'have done' tense and the 'did' tense is not one of time. I can say, 'I have seen the Taj Mahal; I saw it two months ago', where 'have seen' and 'saw' refer to exactly the same action at exactly the same time.

In fact, the difference between the 'have done' tense and the 'did' tense is one of mode—the way in which you look at the action. When you say, 'I have seen the Taj Mahal', you are not interested in *when* you saw it. It doesn't matter whether you saw it an hour ago or 50 years ago. You are interested in the present result—the result *now* at the time of speaking or writing—of the action of seeing the Taj Mahal. What is the present result of seeing the Taj in 'I have seen the Taj Mahal'? It is that I am now a person with direct experience of the Taj; I am now a person who can tell you something about it from my own personal experience.<sup>1</sup>

If, on the other hand, I say, 'I saw the Taj two months ago', I am chiefly interested in the *action* of seeing and in the time when it happened, and not in the result *now*.

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that there is also a London in Canada, so he will have to modify his rule to read, 'There is a London in England, and a London in Canada. The London in England is much bigger than the other and much better known, so that usually when I read the word "London", I must expect it to refer to the one in England, unless the context shows that it is the other that is meant.')

In this article, I select the *commonest* and most useful uses of the tenses I deal with, but I also deal with some rather less common and less useful ones which cause trouble to foreign students.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot agree with those who say that *have seen* in 'I have seen the Taj Mahal' does not show present result. All recent investigations into how the human brain works have shown that everything which an individual sees, hears, tastes or feels during his life is stored up in cells in his brain. At any given moment, therefore, the results of all his past experience are quite literally *present* in his brain.

We can summarize these facts like this:

'have done' tense	}	no difference in time.
'did' tense		

'have done' tense—interest in result now.  
 'did' tense—interest in the action and in the time when it happened.

As for the difference between the 'did' tense and the 'had done' tense, this is one of relative time. Both these tenses are signs that the action is in the past; but, whereas the 'did' tense merely shows that the action happened earlier than *now*, the 'had done' tense shows that it happened earlier than *another* action or point of time in the past (it does not matter how short or long a time before, nor how short or long a time before the present); e.g. 'First I washed, then I ate my breakfast'. There are two actions here, one of which happened before the other (the washing before the eating). I can say, 'When I had washed, I ate my breakfast.' Here the tense of 'had washed' shows that the washing was already finished when the eating began. The difference can be seen in the following two utterances: 'John had broken his leg when I saw him', and 'John broke his leg when I saw him'.

In the first of these two utterances, the tense of 'had broken' shows us that the breaking happened *before* the seeing. In the second, the meaning is: first I saw him, and then (immediately *after*) he broke his leg.

We can summarize these facts like this:

'did' tense	}	both past.
'had done' tense		

'did' tense—once past.  
 'had done' tense—twice past; or pre-past; or before another past action or moment in the past.

## 2. The tenses 'did' and 'was/were doing' referring to present or future time

In the utterance, 'If he came as early as that, he wouldn't find me in', does 'came' refer to past time, or to present time, or to future time? And in the utterance, 'If we were living in London, we would be

going to the theatre at least once a week', does 'were living' refer to past time, or to present time, or to future time?

In the first of these two utterances, 'came' refers to an action in the *future*, not the past. And in the second, 'were living' refers to an 'imaginary' action in the *present*, not the past.

In fact the 'did' and 'was/were doing' tenses do *not* always show past time. They sometimes show future time and sometimes present time. This happens quite often in conditional sentences.

### 3. Tenses in conditional sentences

The four commonest sequences of tenses in conditional sentences are:

- (i) *Showing past time*: e.g. 'If I had seen him, I would have told you'.
- (ii) *Showing present time*: e.g. 'If it was raining, we would be sheltering under a tree'.
- (iii) *Showing future time*: e.g. 'If I see him, I shall invite him to lunch'.
- (iv) *Showing future time plus improbability*: e.g. 'If I saw him, I would invite him to lunch'.

In (i), the sequence of tenses is:

'If... had done..., ... would/should have done...'

In (ii), it is:

'If... was/were doing..., ... would/should be doing...'

In (iii), it is:

'If... do/does..., ... will/shall do...'

And in (iv), it is:

'If... did..., ... would/should do...'

Therefore, in (i) the 'had done' tense shows past time plus imaginarity; in (ii), the 'was/were doing' tense shows present time plus imaginarity; in (iii), the 'do/does' tense shows future time; and in (iv), the 'did' tense shows future time plus improbability.

<sup>1</sup> When I say, 'If I see him, I shall invite him to lunch', I do not indicate whether it is probable or improbable that I shall see him: the chances of my seeing him are 50 per cent. When, however, I say, 'If I saw him, I would invite him to lunch', I indicate that it is improbable that I shall see him by using the tense 'saw' instead of 'see'. The chances of my seeing him are less than 50 per cent. In other words, I do *not* expect to see him.

#### 4. Tenses which show future time

What are the differences in meaning or usage between the following?

- (i) 'I shall leave at six tomorrow.'
- (ii) 'I will leave at six tomorrow.'
- (iii) 'I'll leave at six tomorrow.'
- (iv) 'I'm going to leave at six tomorrow.'
- (v) 'I'm leaving at six tomorrow.'
- (vi) 'I leave at six tomorrow.'
- (vii) 'I shall be leaving at six tomorrow.'
- (viii) 'I will be leaving at six tomorrow.'
- (ix) 'I'll be leaving at six tomorrow.'

There is obviously no difference in time between any of these: the time of leaving is in each case exactly the same—six o'clock on the day following the day on which the utterance is made.

The differences, where they exist, must therefore be modal; i.e. they must be differences in the speaker's attitude towards the action or the time.

To all intents and purposes, (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) above have the same meaning in present-day English. They show that the action is in the future, and do not say anything about wishes or intentions.<sup>1</sup>

(v) and (vi) show future time plus intention (one cannot, for example, say, 'It is raining tomorrow', or 'It rains tomorrow', because there is no element of intention in these cases). (v) usually shows that the intention is the speaker's or writer's (i.e. 'I'm leaving at six tomorrow' would usually show that this is *my* own plan); while (vi) usually shows that the intention is somebody else's (i.e.

<sup>1</sup> American, Scottish and Irish speakers do not, in most cases, observe the distinction found in traditional grammars between 'I shall' and 'I will'. Even in England, this distinction appears to be dying out, and I think it is certainly not worth bothering about when one is teaching students whose mother tongue is not English. If you teach 'I will, you will, he will, we will, etc.' for writing, and 'I'll, you'll, he'll, we'll, etc.' for speaking, it will be much easier, and you will be teaching the usage of the vast majority of native English speakers. Later you could teach 'Shall I . . . ?' (which means, 'Do you want me to . . . ?') and 'Shall he . . . ?' ('Do you want him to . . . ?'); and even later you could tell the students that in older books and in the usage of some contemporary speakers 'I shall', 'we shall' replace 'I will', 'we will' in cases where there is no intention, or where there is strong, obstinate intention (e.g. in 'I shall go to the cinema if I want to! You can't stop me!').

'I leave at six tomorrow' would usually show that somebody *else* has planned that I should leave at that time).

(vii), (viii) and (ix) are all the same (cf. footnote, page 29). The difference between them, on one side, and (i), (ii) and (iii), on the other, is that (vii), (viii) and (ix) are usually more informal and friendly.

I have the impression that the 'going to do' future and the 'will be doing' future are becoming more and more common in English, while the 'will do' future, and particularly the 'shall do' future, are becoming less popular. In Her Majesty the Queen's New Year speech this year,<sup>1</sup> the following tenses are used with a future meaning:

will do	twice
will be doing	4 times
shall be doing	twice
am/are/is doing	4 times
do/does	4 times

## The Sequence of Tenses with 'If'-Clauses<sup>1</sup>

The problem of sequence of tenses in English has intrigued me for many years, because the grammars either gloss over it, or give rules which are obviously inaccurate. In one English course which I have before me, for instance, it is stated: 'If the verb in the main clause is in a past tense, the verb in a subordinate clause must also be in a past tense.' Two exceptions are given, one relating to permanent truths in Reported Speech, the other to adverb clauses of comparison. Examples of the sequence of tenses in conditional sentences are given.

Twice before, such utterances as 'If you wouldn't mind waiting here a moment, I'll tell the manager you've arrived' and 'If you'll pardon my saying so, you made a big mistake in taking this house' prompted me to begin an investigation into the sequence of tenses in the pattern *If* + Subject of the 'if'-clause + Verb (+ Extensions, if any) + Subject of main clause + Verb (+ Extensions, if any) (e.g. 'If I see him, I'll tell you'). However, each time the results were so alarming that I stopped my researches.

Recently, however, I took them up again systematically. I took 18 English tenses and tried which would go with which if I put one of them in the 'if'-clause and another in the main clause. I discovered that every combination was possible, i.e. that I was able to produce 324 ( $18 \times 18$ ) combinations. I give these below. A number of these combinations are, of course, rare because the situations which would require them are rare; but I believe that every one of them would be passed as normal by the average linguistically unsophisticated native speaker of Standard English if he were to hear it in a suitable, natural context without having his attention specially drawn to it.

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Language Learning*, Vol. X, Nos. 3 and 4, 1960.

The fact that these combinations exist does not, of course, mean that we have to teach them all to our students. As with other aspects of the English language, we should choose the ones we wish to teach, grade these, decide which of them we are going to teach in which year, and then leave the students to pick the rest up in their reading and listening after we have finished our course with them. The list that follows will enable the teacher to check whether he has left out any combination that he thinks worth teaching; and it will save him from the indignity of giving his students 'rules' and then having them confronting him with examples that contradict them.

I am aware that my combinations illustrate different meanings of 'if', but I do not think that teachers will find it easy to put these differences into words.

The tenses I have used are numbered as follows:

go/goes	I or 1 <sup>1</sup>
am/are/is going	II or 2
am/are/is going to go	III or 3
will/shall go	IV or 4
will/shall be going	V or 5
would/should go	VI or 6
would/should be going	VII or 7
went	VIII or 8
was/were going	IX or 9
have/has gone	X or 10
have/has been going	XI or 11
had gone	XII or 12
had been going	XIII or 13
will/shall have gone	XIV or 14
would/should have gone	XV or 15
will/shall have been going	XVI or 16
would/should have been going	XVII or 17
used to go	XVIII or 18

<sup>1</sup> The Roman numerals (I, II, etc.) refer to the 'if'-clause; the Arabic numerals (1, 2, etc.) to the main clause. Thus, for example, XI/4 means that the tense in the 'if'-clause is the 'have/has been going' tense; and the tense in the main clause, the 'will/shall go' tense.

Here are the combinations:

I/1 If you go, I go too.  
 I/2 If you go, he's going too.  
 I/3 If you go, I'm going to go too.  
 I/4 If he goes, I'll go too.  
 I/5 If you go, he'll be going soon after.  
 I/6 If he goes, I'd like to go too.  
 I/7 If the plane leaves at 7, I'd be making a fool of myself (if I were to get to the airport at 5).  
 I/8 If he really has a gold watch, he probably stole it.  
 I/9 All right, if you say so, I *was* making a mistake.  
 I/10 If he's not here, he's gone to the market.  
 I/11 If he really comes here once a week, he's been telling us lies.  
 I/12 If it's seven now, I'd finished my work by five.  
 I/13 If it's seven now, I'd been working for three hours when John arrived.  
 I/14 If it's really Monday today, I'll have been here a week tomorrow.  
 I/15 If I go, I'd have liked *him* to have gone first.  
 I/16 If it's the twentieth today, I'll have been working here exactly three months tomorrow.  
 I/17 If he becomes an earl, I'd have been making a big fool of myself (if I'd refused to marry him).  
 I/18 If he's the man I mean, he used to swim a lot when he was younger.

II/1 If he's going to the market, I want him to buy me some fruit.  
 II/2 If you're going, I'm going too.  
 II/3 If you're going, I'm going to go too.  
 II/4 If you're staying, I shall try to stay too.  
 II/5 If he's staying with a family, he'll soon be speaking good English.  
 II/6 If he's staying, I'd like to stay too.  
 II/7 If he's taking part in the race, I'd be making a fool of myself (if I entered).

II/8 If he's really eating a fish, he probably bought it in the market: I don't believe he caught it himself.

II/9 If he's being a fool now, you were being a bigger one a moment ago.

II/10 If she's washing up the dishes, they've obviously finished breakfast.

II/11 If he's making a fool of himself now, you've been making a fool of yourself for years.

II/12 If I'm not making a mistake, I'd finished my work by five.

II/13 If I'm not making a mistake, I'd been working for two hours when you arrived.

II/14 If you're only just starting now, you won't have finished by six.

II/15 If you are feeling cold *now*, you would have been unable to stand the cold a month ago.

II/16 If you are thinking of stopping at six, we'll have been working for three hours then.

II/17 If you're feeling cold *now*, you would have been feeling really terrible (if you'd been here a month ago during our cold spell).

II/18 If he's being silly now, he used to be quite mad a year ago.

III/1 If you're really going to go, I hope it'll be soon.

III/2 If you're really going to go, we're hoping it won't be for long.

III/3 If it's going to rain, it's going to rain, and there's nothing we can do about it.

III/4 If you're going to go, you'll no doubt make the arrangements yourself.

III/5 If you're going to go, you'll no doubt be making the arrangements yourself.

III/6 If you're going to go, you'd no doubt like to take your wife with you.

III/7 If you're going to go, we would be making a big mistake (if we were to stay).

III/8 If you are in fact going to go, John was right after all.

III/9 If Anne is in fact going to go, John was telling the truth after all.

III/10 If Anne *is* in fact going to go, Mary has made a mistake.  
 III/11 If Anne *is* in fact going to go, John has been telling the truth.  
 III/12 If you *are* in fact going to leave, I *had* hoped you would at least have warned me.  
 III/13 If you *are* in fact going to leave, I *had* been hoping you would at least have warned me.  
 III/14 If you *are* in fact going to leave at eight, Jane will have left by the time you get there.  
 III/15 If she *is* in fact going to leave tomorrow, she will no doubt have been packing today.  
 III/16 If you *are* in fact going to leave tomorrow, it would have been better (if you had warned us).  
 III/17 If you *are* in fact going to leave tomorrow, you would have been showing more common-sense (if you'd warned us).  
 III/18 If you *are* in fact going to leave early, it *used* to be the custom to let someone know first.

IV/1 If you'll pardon me, it *doesn't* rain here every day.  
 IV/2 If you'll pardon my saying so, it *is* raining.  
 IV/3 If you will allow me, I'm going to stay here.  
 IV/4 If you'll wait a minute, I'll tell the manager you're here.  
 IV/5 If you'll pardon me, the party *will* be taking place this evening.  
 IV/6 If you'll permit me, I'd like the afternoon off today.  
 IV/7 If you'll pardon my saying so, you'd be taking a great risk (if you did that).  
 IV/8 If you'll pardon me, I *was* here yesterday!  
 IV/9 If you'll allow me to say so, you were trying to do something impossible.  
 IV/10 If you'll pardon me, you've left something out.  
 IV/11 If you'll pardon me, I've been waiting here longer than *you*.  
 IV/12 If you'll pardon me, I *had* finished by seven.  
 IV/13 If you'll pardon me, I *had* been working for three hours when you arrived.  
 IV/14 If you'll pardon my saying so again, I *will* have been here a year next Monday.

IV/15 If you'll allow me to say so, I'd have liked the concert to have been shorter.

IV/16 If you'll pardon my disagreeing with you, I *will* have been working here five years ~~next~~ Monday.

IV/17 If you'll pardon my saying so, I'd have been making a fool of myself (if I'd stayed any longer).

IV/18 If you'll excuse me, I used to play tennis very well when I was younger.

V/1 If he *will* really be endangering our lives by staying here, he leaves at once.

V/2 If we shall be running a risk by going out, I'm staying at home.

V/3 If you'll be sleeping when I get home, I'm not going to bother to bring you any ice-cream.

V/4 If he'll be running a risk by going there, I shall warn him.

V/5 If he'll be running a risk by staying here until the monsoons, he'll probably soon be leaving us.

V/6 If he'll be running a risk by staying here, I'd prefer him to go.

V/7 If he'll be running in the race, I'd be making a fool of myself (if *I* entered).

V/8 If he'll be endangering our lives by staying any longer, we were foolish to ask him to do so.

V/9 If he'll be endangering our lives by staying any longer, we were taking a big risk when we asked him to do so.

V/10 If he'll be endangering our lives by staying any longer, we've made a big mistake in asking him to do so.

V/11 If he *will* be endangering our lives by staying any longer, we have been endangering his by talking too much.

V/12 If he *will* be endangering our lives by staying here, he had at least warned us when we took him in.

V/13 If he *will* be endangering your lives by staying here, hadn't he been risking his life to protect us right up to the time he was wounded?

V/14 If he *will* be endangering our lives by staying any longer, we shall not have let his kindness to us go unrewarded.

V/15 If he will be endangering our lives by staying here, it would have been wiser not to have offered to take him in.

V/16 If he will be endangering our lives by staying here, we shall merely have been trying to repay his many kindnesses to us.

V/17 If he will be endangering our lives by staying any longer, we would have been showing more foresight (if we had asked him to leave yesterday).

V/18 If he *will* be endangering our lives by staying here, *we* used to endanger *his* often enough when we were staying with him.

VI/1 If it would interest you to know it, the film begins at six.

VI/2 If it would interest you to know it, it's snowing again.

VI/3 If you would really *like* to go, I'm not going to stop you.

VI/4 If you would wait here, I'll go and tell him you want to see him.

VI/5 If it would interest you to know it, I'll be leaving at ten.

VI/6 If your wife would like to come too, I'd be grateful for a few hours' warning.

VI/7 If you should go to the shops this morning, you'd be doing me a great service (if you were to buy me some too).

VI/8 If it would interest you to know it, I saw him alive yesterday afternoon!

VI/9 If it would interest you to know it, I was earning my living when you were still in your cradle!

VI/10 If it would interest you to know it, I've just had an accident with the car.

VI/11 If it would interest you to know it, he's been telling you a pack of lies.

VI/12 If it would interest you to know it, I'd finished before you even began.

VI/13 If it would interest you to know it, I'd already been working for two hours when you arrived.

VI/14 If it would interest you to know it, I shall have been here ten years next Monday.

VI/15 If it would interest you to know it, I would have helped you (if you'd asked me).

VI/16 If it would interest you to know it, I shall have been working here for ten years next Monday.

VI/17 If it would interest you to know it, I would have been earning £2,000 a year by now if I had stayed with my old employers.

VI/18 If it would interest you to know it, I used to be a champion swimmer when I was at school.

VII/1 If you should be thinking of buying some cheese, we have some already.

VII/2 If you should be thinking of going out, it's raining hard.

VII/3 If it would be cheating to look, I'm not going to do so.

VII/4 If it would be cheating to look, I'll keep my eyes shut.

VII/5 If you should be thinking of giving me a lift, I'll be passing your house at about five.

VII/6 If you should be thinking of buying some cheese, I'd be grateful for some too.

VII/7 If you should be thinking of buying some cheese, you'd be doing me a great favour (if you bought *me* some).

VII/8 If you should be thinking of buying some cheese, *I* bought some this morning, so we don't need any more.

VII/9 If you should be thinking of going to the cinema, *I* was intending to see 'Limelight' tonight.

VII/10 If you should be thinking of buying some cheese, *I've* already bought some for ourselves.

VII/11 If you should be thinking of buying that house, *I've* been talking to the last tenant about it, and he says it's awful.

VII/12 If you should be thinking of buying *that* house, *I'd* already made all the necessary arrangements for buying it myself before you even saw it.

VII/13 If you should be thinking of challenging my claim to having the longest service, I had already been working here two years when the next man joined.

VII/14 If you should be trying to find a suitable day for an office holiday, our firm will have been in existence 10 years next Monday, so you might choose that day.

VII/15 If it would be cheating to look, I would have liked to have been told before the game began instead of now.

VII/16 If you should be trying to find a suitable day for an office holiday, our firm will have been going 10 years next Monday.

VII/17 If it would be cheating for me to look now, it would surely also have been cheating for you to look half an hour ago.

VII/18 If you should be thinking of taking on a gardener, I used to be head gardener to Lord Snooks.

VIII/1 If he arrived at 9 yesterday and today, he probably arrives at that time every day.

VIII/2 If he went to bed as late as that, he's probably still sleeping now.

VIII/3 If he deliberately broke it, I'm going to punish him.

VIII/4 If he went to bed as late as that, he won't be awake yet.

VIII/5 If he went to bed as late as that, he probably won't be getting up for breakfast.

VIII/6 If it rained tomorrow, we would have to stay at home.

VIII/7 If you came at 1, we would be having our lunch.

VIII/8 If he said so, he said so, and that's the end of it.

VIII/9 If he said so, he was telling a lie.

VIII/10 If she got a doll for her birthday, she hasn't got it any more now.

VIII/11 If he went to the cinema with another girl yesterday, he's been telling me a pack of lies.

VIII/12 If he left the office at 4, he had obviously finished all his work by then.

VIII/13 If he left the office at 4, he had been working 4 hours when he stopped.

VIII/14 If what he said was true, he will have been working here for 25 years next month.

VIII/15 If he wasn't such a terrible bore, we'd certainly have visited him more often while he was here.

VIII/16 If that last church clock was right, we shall have been driving solidly for four hours in a few minutes' time.

VIII/17 If what he said was right, he would have been earning £2,000 a year by now (if he hadn't left his old firm).

VIII/18 If the Smith you mean was a famous swimmer in his youth, I *certainly* used to know him.

IX/1 If he was leaving for Paris on Monday, he is probably there by now.

IX/2 If he was staying at that hotel yesterday, he's probably staying there today too.

IX/3 If he was sleeping instead of working, he's going to get into trouble.

IX/4 If he was staying at this hotel when you met him, I shall try to find his name in the register.

IX/5 If he was living here last time you met him, he'll probably be living here next time you meet him too.

IX/6 If we were living in Bermuda, we'd swim all the year round.

IX/7 If we were living in Bermuda, we'd be swimming all the year round.

IX/8 If he was really trying to get the job, he went the wrong way about it.

IX/9 If you were hoping to win, you were being over-optimistic.

IX/10 If he was hoping to get here by five, his hopes have been frustrated.

IX/11 If you were hoping to finish by five, why have you been doing nothing for the past hour?

IX/12 If you were leaving the office early this afternoon, I had hoped to have tea with you.

IX/13 If you were leaving the office early this afternoon, I'd been hoping to have tea with you.

IX/14 If he was telling the truth, he'll have been here for 50 years next Monday.

IX/15 If we were spending this winter in London, we would have gone to see the Boat Race last Saturday.

IX/16 If he was telling the truth, he'll have been living here 50 years next Monday.

IX/17 If he was telling the truth when he said that he was a millionaire, he would surely have been wearing better clothes.

IX/18 If he was telling the truth, he used to live here when he was a boy.

X/1 If *Jack* has left, *we* leave too.

X/2 If it's stopped raining, I'm going out.

X/3 If he hasn't come yet, he's going to get into trouble.

X/4 If it's stopped raining, he'll soon be here.

X/5 If it's stopped raining, I shall be leaving very soon.

X/6 If it's stopped raining, I'd like to go out.

X/7 If you've seen the murderer recently, you'd be doing us a great service by informing the police.

X/8 If he's left, he obviously did so before we arrived.

X/9 If he's paid the money back, I was misjudging him just now.

X/10 If the bus has left, it's left, and there's nothing to be done about it.

X/11 If he's hurt his foot, he's obviously been climbing trees again.

X/12 If he's found it, I *had* hoped he'd bring it back to me.

X/13 If he's found it, I *had* been hoping he'd bring it back to me.

X/14 If I haven't made a mistake, I'll have been here 10 years next Monday.

X/15 If he's broken any bones, I'd have liked to have been informed earlier.

X/16 If I haven't made a mistake, I'll have been living here 10 years next Monday.

X/17 If I haven't made a mistake in my calculations, I'd have been earning £2,000 a year by now (if I'd stayed in my old firm).

X/18 If I haven't made a mistake in my calculations, my salary 20 years ago used to buy more than my present salary does now.

XI/1 If it's been raining a lot when we go out, the streets are always very muddy.

XI/2 If he's been talking his usual nonsense, I'm going.

XI/3 If he's been telling lies again, he's going to get into trouble.

XI/4 If he's been breaking things, his mother will punish him.

XI/5 If it's been raining a lot in the south, the Smiths will presumably be congratulating themselves on not having gone there.

XI/6 If he's been writing more poems, I'd like to see them.  
XI/7 If he's been stealing flowers, you'd be doing us a great service by telling the police.  
XI/8 If he's been waiting for so long, he obviously arrived much too early.  
XI/9 If he's been living here so long, I was making a mistake just now when I said he was a newcomer.  
XI/10 If he's been living in *that* place, he's undoubtedly discovered what real discomfort means.  
XI/11 If he's been selling you firewood, he's been stealing it from us.  
XI/12 If he's been making so much money, I had hoped he'd give some to his old mother.  
XI/13 If he's been making so much money, I had been hoping he'd give some to his old mother.  
XI/14 If he hasn't been telling lies, he'll have been here 10 years next Monday.  
XI/15 If he's been misbehaving, I'd have liked to have been informed earlier.  
XI/16 If he hasn't been telling lies, he'll have been living here 10 years next Monday.  
XI/17 If he hasn't been telling us lies, he'd have been earning £2,000 a year by now if he had stayed with his old firm.  
XI/18 If he hasn't been telling lies, he used to live here as a boy.

XII/1 If he had already gone when you arrived, I don't see how you can have met him.  
XII/2 If he'd already gone when you arrived, I'm leaving this office.  
XII/3 If he had hoped to become manager, he's going to be disappointed when he hears this news.  
XII/4 If he'd already gone when you arrived, we shall dismiss him.  
XII/5 If he'd already gone when you arrived, he'll be getting the sack within the next few days.  
XII/6 If you'd left earlier, you wouldn't be in this jam now.  
XII/7 If we'd left at 7, we'd be having dinner in London now.

XII/8 If he'd already gone when she arrived, she naturally didn't see him.

XII/9 If he'd already gone when she arrived, she was making a mistake when she said she'd seen him.

XII/10 If he'd already gone when you arrived, I haven't been informed of it yet.

XII/11 If he'd already gone when you arrived, he's been telling me lies again.

XII/12 If he'd made a mistake, *you'd* certainly made one too.

XII/13 If he'd made a mistake, he'd been hoping to conceal the fact.

XII/14 If he'd hoped to become manager, he won't have achieved his ambition by the time he retires.

XII/15 If he'd left earlier, he'd have arrived by now.

XII/16 If he'd already gone when you arrived, he'll have been feeling pretty ashamed of himself during the past few days.

XII/17 If we'd left earlier, we'd have been having dinner in London by now.

XII/18 If only we'd known, Mr Smith used to live here: he could easily have given us some introductions to people.

XIII/1 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he probably feels pretty disappointed now.

XIII/2 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he's probably feeling pretty disappointed now.

XIII/3 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he's going to be pretty disappointed when he hears this news.

XIII/4 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he'll feel disappointed when he hears this news.

XIII/5 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he'll be feeling pretty disappointed now.

XIII/6 If he'd been hoping to become manager, I'd expect him to show some signs of disappointment now.

XIII/7 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he'd surely be showing some signs of disappointment now.

XIII/8 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he certainly didn't show it.

XIII/9 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he certainly wasn't showing any signs of disappointment when I saw him.

XIII/10 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he certainly hasn't succeeded in doing so yet.

XIII/11 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he certainly hasn't been having much success recently.

XIII/12 If John had been playing football, he'd certainly managed to keep the fact secret.

XIII/13 If John had been playing football, his brothers had probably been doing so too.

XIII/14 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he won't have achieved his ambition by the time he retires.

XIII/15 If I'd been leaving at 6, I'd have liked to have gone by bus.

XIII/16 If he'd been hoping to become manager, he'll have been feeling pretty disappointed since Mr Smith's appointment was announced.

XIII/17 If we'd been living in London, we'd have been going to a lot of concerts.

XIII/18 If he'd been hoping to become manager in those days, his conduct usedn't to be a very good recommendation for him.

XIV/1 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I intend to leave now, as I don't want to meet him alone.

XIV/2 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I'm not staying.

XIV/3 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, it's going to be difficult to explain.

XIV/4 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, there won't be anybody to interpret.

XIV/5 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I'll be leaving before you do.

XIV/6 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I'd like to stay.

XIV/7 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, you'd be doing me a great favour by leaving this message for him.

XIV/8 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I made a mistake when I told him you'd still be here.

XIV/9 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I was making a mistake when I told him you'd still be here.

XIV/10 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I've misled him.

XIV/11 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I've been giving everybody misleading information.

XIV/12 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I had hoped you would have had the sense to leave a message.

XIV/13 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I had been hoping you'd have had the sense to leave a message.

XIV/14 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, he'll have made his journey in vain.

XIV/15 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, I'd have liked you to have warned him.

XIV/16 The cook's been working all morning making you a special cake: if you'll have gone by the time it's ready, she'll have been going to all this trouble for nothing.

XIV/17 If you'll have gone by the time he gets back, you'd have been showing more consideration for others (if you'd warned him).

XIV/18 If—as you say—he'll have gone by the time we get back, he usedn't to be so inconsiderate when I first knew him.

XV/1 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, I don't see why you told him to return so late anyway.

XV/2 If he'd have gone by the time you got back, he obviously isn't telling the truth when he says he intended to wait for you.

XV/3 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, it's going to be difficult to explain why you told him to come at that time.

XV/4 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, it won't be easy to explain why you told him to return so late.

XV/5 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, you'll no doubt be giving some thought to revising your system of recording engagements, so that this sort of thing can't happen again.

XV/6 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, I'd like you to have warned him.

XV/7 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, you'd be doing me a favour (if you were to keep a closer eye on your diary of engagements).

XV/8 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, it was wise of you to put him off.

XV/9 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, you were being unfair in not warning him.

XV/10 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, he's told us the truth, hasn't he?

XV/11 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, he's been telling us the truth, hasn't he?

XV/12 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, I had hoped you would have warned him.

XV/13 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, I'd been hoping you'd have warned him.

XV/14 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, this fact will no doubt have made you realize at last that your system of recording engagements needs revision.

XV/15 If you'd have gone by the time he got back, wouldn't it have been kinder to have told him not to return in the *first* place?

XV/16 If he'd have gone by the time you arrived, he will no doubt have been spending at least part of this morning revising his system of recording engagements.

XV/17 If you'd have gone by the time he arrived, you'd have been showing more consideration for others (if you'd told him not to come in the *first* place).

XV/18 If you'd have gone by the time he arrived, you usedn't to be so forgetful when you worked with me.

XVI/1 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I suggest we don't go.

XVI/2 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I'm not going.

XVI/3 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I'm not going to go.

XVI/4 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I shan't go.

XVI/5 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I shan't be going.

XVI/6 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I should prefer not to go.

XVI/7 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, you would be doing me a great favour by not accepting the invitation.

XVI/8 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I was wrong.

XVI/9 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I was making a mistake when I said we would get there for the opening.

XVI/10 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I have misled our hosts.

XVI/11 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I have been giving everybody misleading information.

XVI/12 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I had hoped you would refuse the invitation.

XVI/13 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I'd been hoping you'd refuse the invitation.

XVI/14 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, we'll have gone to all this trouble in vain.

XVI/15 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, I'd have liked you to have warned our hosts.

XVI/16 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, we'll have been going to all this trouble in vain.

XVI/17 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, you'd have been showing more consideration for our hosts by warning them.

XVI/18 If the party will have been going an hour by the time we can get there, it used to be customary, when I was young, to warn one's hosts.

XVII/1 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, I don't see why you wanted to go at all.

XVII/2 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, somebody's not telling the truth.

XVII/3 If the party would have been going an hour by the time we could get there, I'm not going to shed tears over having missed it.

XVII/4 If the party would have been going an hour by the time we could get there, I won't shed tears over having missed it.

XVII/5 If the party would have been going an hour by the time we could get there, I won't be shedding any tears over having missed it.

XVII/6 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, I'd like to know why you were so keen to go anyway.

XVII/7 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, you'd be clearing up a mystery (if you could tell me why you were so keen to go).

XVII/8 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, it was wise of you not to go.

XVII/9 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, you were being wise when you decided not to go.

XVII/10 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, John has told you the truth.

XVII/11 If the party would have been going an hour by the time we could get there, John has been telling us the truth all along.

XVII/12 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, I had hoped you would have warned your host.

XVII/13 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, I had been hoping you would have warned your host.

XVII/14 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, it will no doubt already have struck you that you didn't miss much by not going.

XVII/15 If the party would have been going an hour by the time we could get there, it wouldn't have been much fun going there in any case.

XVII/16 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, you will no doubt have been congratulating yourself on having had the foresight to decline the invitation.

XVII/17 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, you would have been showing more consideration for your hosts by warning them.

XVII/18 If the party would have been going an hour by the time you could get there, it used to be customary, when *I* was young, to warn one's hosts.

XVIII/1 If you used to steal apples as a boy, I don't think it's a thing to boast about now.

XVIII/2 If your father used to know the manager well, I'm hoping he'll give you the job.

XVIII/3 If he used to be a thief, I'm going to tell the manager.

XVIII/4 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he'll no doubt try to forget it now.

XVIII/5 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he'll no doubt be trying to forget it now.

XVIII/6 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he'd no doubt like to forget it now.

XVIII/7 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, we'd be acting dishonestly by not informing the manager.

XVIII/8 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, at any rate he wasn't a very successful one.

XVIII/9 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he was telling lies when he said he'd never stolen a thing in his life.

XVIII/10 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he hasn't told anyone *here* about it.

XVIII/11 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he's been hiding the fact very successfully.

XVIII/12 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he had reformed before he joined our firm.

XVIII/13 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he had been

leading an honest life for some considerable time when I first met him.

XVIII/14 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he will have gone straight for some considerable time by the time he enters our employment.

XVIII/15 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, he will have been going straight for some considerable time by the time he enters our employment.

XVIII/16 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, you would have done us a service by informing us as soon as you found out.

XVIII/17 If he used to be a thief a few years ago, you would have been doing us a service by informing us.

XVIII/18 If he used to be a thief, he used, at least, to be able to avoid being found out.

## ‘Some’ and ‘Any’<sup>1</sup>

The statement is often found in grammars of English—particularly in those that are intended for students whose mother-tongue is not English—that *some* in affirmative sentences becomes *any* in negative or interrogative ones.

Sometimes the rule ‘*some* in affirmative sentences, *any* in negative and interrogative ones’ is qualified by a hint that exceptions exist, e.g. in a recent review in *Word*,<sup>2</sup> we read, ‘We may consider the occasional colloquial use of *some* in Q’s . . . to be simply a stylistic variant of a more normal sentence with *any*.’ However, the reviewer marks ‘We ate anything’ and ‘We didn’t eat something’ with asterisks, meaning that he cannot accept them as English at all.

I have known for many years that *any* does occur in affirmative sentences, and *some* in both negative and interrogative ones, so I set about building up a table to see whether all the boxes in a grid with *some/any* along one axis and affirmative/negative/interrogative along the other could be filled. Here are my results:

	SOMEONE	ANYONE
Affirmative	I met <i>someone</i> who knows you at the party yesterday.	He is ready to discuss philosophy with <i>anyone</i> .

<sup>1</sup> First published in *English Language Teaching*, London, Vol. XVI, No. 2, January–March 1962.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. 16, No. 1 (April 1960), p. 123.

	SOMEONE	ANYONE
Negative	(Why are you so worried?) Because I can't find <i>someone</i> I have to give an urgent message to.	I haven't seen <i>anyone</i> I know here yet.  She doesn't go out with <i>anyone</i> . (It must be a person she knows well.)
Interrogative	Why are you trembling like that? Have you seen <i>someone</i> you didn't want to meet here?	Have you seen <i>anyone</i> you know here?  Is he ready to discuss philosophy with absolutely <i>anyone</i> ?

	SOMETHING	ANYTHING
Affirmative	(Why are you looking so pale?) Because I ate <i>something</i> that disagreed with me yesterday.	When we were prisoners of war, we ate <i>anything</i> we could get hold of.  Well brought up children don't have fads about food. They are willing to eat <i>anything</i> .
Negative	(Why are you looking so gloomy?) Because I haven't received <i>something</i> I was expecting to get in this morning's mail.	I haven't had <i>anything</i> to eat yet.  I don't believe just <i>anything</i> I'm told.

	SOMETHING	ANYTHING
Interrogative	(Why are you so white?) Did you see <i>something</i> that frightened you just now?	Did you see <i>anything</i> you liked there? Does your little boy really eat <i>anything</i> he's given?

	SOME	ANY
Affirmative	If you want pears, pick <i>some</i> from the tree.  Pick <i>some</i> pears from the tree.	Did you say you have too many lamps? I'm ready to buy <i>any</i> you don't want.  I'm ready to buy <i>any</i> lamps you don't want.
Negative	I don't need <i>some</i> of these stamps. (I've already got ones like them in my collection, so could I just take those I want and leave the rest?)  (Why are you so mad?) Because the store hasn't delivered <i>some</i> cookies that I asked them to send for this afternoon's tea-party.	Here's one newspaper, but I'm afraid I don't have <i>any</i> more.  I'm afraid I don't have <i>any</i> more newspapers.

	SOME	ANY
Interrogative	(Here's a flower-seller.) Would you like <i>some</i> ?  Would you like <i>some</i> flowers?	I've forgotten to bring my money. Do you have <i>any</i> ?  Do you have <i>any</i> money?

	SOMEWHERE	ANYWHERE
Affirmative	John lives <i>somewhere</i> near here.	It's no good looking for your needle at this time of night. It might be <i>anywhere</i> .
Negative	No, John hasn't got a country house <i>somewhere</i> near Bude (as you thought he had).	I haven't seen your needle <i>anywhere</i> .
Interrogative	Does John really live <i>somewhere</i> near Bude now? (I heard a rumour to that effect, but I would like your confirmation.)	Have you seen my pen <i>anywhere</i> ?

	SOMEHOW (modifying a verb) <sup>1</sup>	ANYHOW (modifying a verb) <sup>1</sup>
Affirmative	I must get in touch with him <i>somewhere</i> .	You can do it <i>anyhow</i> you like.
Negative	..... <sup>2</sup>	I can't get this compass into this box <i>anyhow</i> . (Are you sure it is the right box?)
Interrogative	Can I get in touch with him <i>somewhere</i> ?	May we dress <i>anyhow</i> for the picnic tomorrow?

It will be seen from the above, that *some* in negative and interrogative sentences is not merely a 'stylistic variant' of *any*; nor is *any* in affirmative sentences simply a stylistic variant of *some*. The difference is fundamentally a semantic one, with *some* meaning something like '(a) particular one(s)', and *any* something like 'it does not matter which one(s)'.

<sup>1</sup> *Somewhere* and *anyhow* as sentence-modifiers are independent (e.g. *Somewhere*, I believe he's right; *Somewhere*, I don't believe he's right; *Somewhere*, don't you think he may be right? *Anyhow*, you must be there by six; *Anyhow*, you mustn't be later than six; *Anyhow*, why didn't you tell me?).

<sup>2</sup> I have been unable to find an example of *somewhere* as a verb-modifier in a negative sentence.

## Initial Clusters<sup>1</sup>

1. It is a well-known fact that a student may have no trouble pronouncing a particular list of consonants if he pronounces each by itself, but may have a lot of trouble when he tries to combine two or more of the consonants to pronounce a cluster. For example, he may be able to pronounce *s* in *sip*, *t* in *tip*, and *r* in *rip* with no trouble at all, but he may have considerable difficulty with the cluster *str* in *strip*.
2. Unless a teacher knows what clusters occur in the particular language he is teaching, he cannot give his students systematic practice in pronouncing them. A list of such clusters is therefore useful to him. He can go through it systematically, finding out which of the clusters are difficult for his students, and then he can arrange to give them periodical practice on these. He can also list the clusters in the students' own language and compare them with those in the language they are studying, so that he can predict points of difficulty and determine why they are stumbling-blocks for his students.
3. To do this work properly, the teacher should have separate lists of initial clusters (ones which occur at the beginnings of words), final clusters (ones which occur at the ends of words) and medial clusters (ones which occur in the middles of words, with a vowel immediately preceding and a vowel immediately following). For instance, the cluster /ts/<sup>2</sup> can occur finally in English (e.g. in

<sup>1</sup> First published in *English Language Teaching*, Vol. XIV, No. 3, April-June 1960.

<sup>2</sup> Letters between diagonals // and letters in square brackets [ ] in this chapter show sounds, while *italics* show spellings. Diagonals enclose phonemes, while square brackets enclose allophones (see D. Jones: *The Phoneme: its Nature and Use*, Cambridge: Heffer, 1950, paragraphs 23 and 24).

*cats*), but not initially, whereas in German it can occur both initially (as in *zu*) and finally (as in *Platz*). We would expect English students of German to have trouble with initial /ts/, but not with final /ts/.

4. Lists of clusters exist, but they tend to be drawn up for phoneticians rather than for practising language teachers, so that they do not always help the latter as much as they might. For instance, the final cluster /tlz/ occurs in English (e.g. in *bottles*), but in some lists it is not included, because syllabic /l/ is interpreted as /əl/, so that /tlz/ is replaced by /təlz/. Such an interpretation is perfectly legitimate in a work intended for phoneticians, but a conscientious teacher will want to know that the pronunciation /bɔtlz/ for *bottles* is considered much better by speakers of Standard English<sup>1</sup> than /bɔtəlz/.

5. Furthermore, some of the best lists are based on American English pronunciation, and do not, therefore, fit British Standard English closely enough, if that is what the teacher is trying to teach.

6. In this chapter, the initial clusters are dealt with. I shall exclude clusters found only in obviously foreign loans (e.g. /ts/ in *czar* and *tsetse*, which is replaced by /z/ by many English speakers; /ʃn/ and /ʃm/ in *Schneider* and *Schmidt*; and /dv/ in *Dvorak*. If one starts admitting foreign clusters, there is no end to it).

7. First I shall give a 'model' from which all the clusters can be 'generated'. This is a substitution table from which one can build up all the initial clusters by following certain instructions. Here is the model:

COLUMN A	COLUMN B (1)	COLUMN C	COLUMN D
/s/	/p/	/l/	/j/
	/t/	/r/	
	/k/	/w/	

<sup>1</sup> So-called 'Received Pronunciation', or R.P. See D. Jones: *An Outline of English Phonetics* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1956, Eighth Edition), paragraph 62.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B (2) /f/  (3) /v/ /m/ /n/	COLUMN C	COLUMN D
	(4) /h/ /d/ /g/ /θ/ /ʃ/		
	(5) /h/		

8. The following arrangements are possible (examples of all clusters are given):

A + B(1)	<i>spin, stick, skin</i>
A + B(1) + C/D EXCEPT /spw/, /stw/, /stl/	<i>splash, spray, spew; stream, stew; sclerosis, <sup>1</sup>screw square, skewer</i>
A + B(2) or (3)	<i>sphere, svelte,<sup>2</sup> smash, snow</i>
A + C/D EXCEPT /sr/	<i>slow, swing, sue<sup>3</sup></i>
B(1) or (2) + C/D EXCEPT /pw/, /tl/, /fw/	<i>play, pray, pure; true, twenty, tube;</i>

<sup>1</sup> /skl/ is a rare initial cluster in English.

<sup>2</sup> /sv/ is a rare initial cluster in English.

<sup>3</sup> Some people do not use the initial cluster /sʃ/ in English. They use /s/ instead (e.g. they say /su:/ for *sue* instead of /sʃu:/).

clean, cry, queen,  
cube; flow, free,  
few

B(3) + D

view, mute, news

B(4) + C/D EXCEPT /bw/,<sup>1</sup> /dʒ/ /θl/, /ʃl/, /ʃw/,<sup>2</sup> /ʃj/

blue, brown, beauti-  
ful; draw, dwell,  
duty; glass, grow,  
Gwen,<sup>3</sup> gules;<sup>4</sup>  
three, thwack,  
thews; shriek

B(5) + D

huge<sup>5</sup>

C + D ONLY /lj/

lure.

9. The transition from one consonant sound to the next in English clusters is very close; i.e. there is no vowel sound between them: *spin* is /spin/ not /səpin/. This fact causes difficulty to many students of English as a foreign language, who, for example, say /səkru:/ or /səkəru:/ for *screw*, because their own language does not have close clusters of this kind. Such students confuse *sport* and *support*, etc.

10. Other students have medial clusters of this kind in their own language, but not initial ones, so that, for instance, they say /iskru:/ or /eskru:/ for *screw*. Such students confuse *special* and *especial*, *stray* and *astray*, *steam* and *esteem*, etc.

11. Before teaching clusters, one should make sure that the students can pronounce the consonants of English reasonably well when they are not in clusters.

<sup>1</sup> The initial cluster /bw/ occurs in the word *bwana*, but I class this as an unassimilated loan-word, so I do not include /bw/ among English initial clusters.

<sup>2</sup> The phonetic symbol /ə/ is called *shwa* (pronounced /ʃwa:/) in America, but this word is not generally known in Britain.

<sup>3</sup> The initial cluster /gw/ occurs in proper nouns (e.g. *Guatemala*) and in the words *guano* and *guava*, both of which could be classed as unassimilated loan-words.

<sup>4</sup> The initial cluster /gj/ occurs only in the rare words *gewgaw* and *gules*.

<sup>5</sup> Some speakers use /ç/ (the voiceless palatal fricative) instead of the initial cluster /hj/ (e.g. /çu:dʒ/ for *huge*, instead of /hju:dʒ/).

12. The next step is to find out which clusters they have difficulty with, so that one can know which to concentrate one's efforts on. I find the best way to do this is to get the students to say certain English words, without the teacher saying them or writing them first. For instance, if the teacher wants to test the cluster /θr/, he can hold up three fingers and say, 'How many fingers am I holding up?' If he wants to test /gl/, he can draw a glass on the blackboard and say, 'What's this?' And so on.

13. Once the teacher has found out which clusters his class find difficult, he can work on these, leaving the others aside.

14. Where a particular cluster exists in English, but not in the mother-tongue, it is of course likely to cause trouble, and the students will tend to replace it by something which fits in with the language habits of the mother-tongue. The teacher who can make (or find) a list of the clusters in the students' mother-tongue will be in a good position to understand why students have trouble with certain English clusters when they occur initially, and why they replace them by certain other sequences of sounds. Armed with this knowledge, he will be able to tackle the problem of teaching the English clusters concerned in a systematic way.

15. When a voiced consonant<sup>1</sup> immediately follows a voiceless one, the English speaker makes the transition from one to the other easier by not making the 'voiced' one voiced right from the beginning. For instance, instead of pronouncing *snow* with /s/ followed by a /n/ which is voiced the whole way through, he begins with /s/, then he goes on to a short sound which is rather like breathing audibly through the nose (it is a voiceless kind of /n/), and then he pronounces a real /n/. One can write this in the following way: [s<sub>n</sub>nou], where [n] is a devoiced /n/.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A voiced sound is one pronounced with vibration of the vocal cords. A voiceless one is pronounced without such vibration (see, e.g. P. A. D. MacCarthy: *English Pronunciation*, Cambridge: Heffer, 1944, Chapter V).

<sup>2</sup> A devoiced sound has no vibration of the vocal cords, but it has the weak breath-force that usually accompanies a voiced sound, instead of the stronger breath-force that usually goes with a voiceless sound (see MacCarthy: *op. cit.*, paragraphs 345 and 346).

16. If a student tries to pronounce *snow* with a /n/ which is voiced right through, he is likely to say /sənou/ instead, in his attempt to pronounce a fully voiced /n/ immediately after the /s/. It is therefore useful to teach students to use partly devoiced /l/, /r/, /w/, /v/, /m/ and /n/ when these are the last elements in initial clusters.

17. To teach students how to pronounce a devoiced consonant, get them to pronounce the voiced consonant first, and then to breathe hard through the mouth (or nose, in the case of /m/ and /n/) with the tongue and lips in the same position as for the voiced consonant. For instance, to teach the devoiced [w] in *queen* ([k<sup>w</sup>wi:n]), get them first to pronounce /w/, and then to keep their tongues and lips in the same position while breathing out rather hard.

18. I find that the best way to overcome difficulties with initial clusters is to get students to practise saying them very slowly, dragging out each sound, except in the case of the plosives (/p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/ and /g/), which cannot be dragged out. For instance, if I want to teach *spin*, I first get the students to say *pin*. Then I get them to make a long /s/, with nothing before or after it. Then I get them to make a long /s/ sound followed by /pin/. While they are pronouncing the /s/, they should concentrate on that, and not think of the following /p/. Gradually, as they go on practising, they should try to make the /s/ shorter and shorter: /sssss pin/, /sssspin/, /ssspin/, /sspin/, /spin/. As always with pronunciation, little and often is the best motto. A few minutes' practice every day (or several times a day) is better than three-quarters of an hour at a stretch once a fortnight.

19. When the first element of an initial cluster is a plosive (e.g. in /gr-/ and /pl-/), one can get the students to try putting their tongues and lips in the position for the next element in the cluster while they are holding the stop for the plosive, or even before they make the stop. Thus, when they release the plosive, their organs of speech will already be in the position for the next part of the cluster, and an intrusive /ə/ can be avoided. For example, when saying *queen*, they can first put their lips in the position for /w/, then they can make the stop for /k/, while keeping their lips rounded, and then they can

release the /k/ by lowering the back of the tongue to the position required for /w/. This, in fact, is what native speakers of English do. (For devoicing, see paragraphs 15 to 17 above.)

20. Similarly, in pronouncing *please*, the students can first close their lips for /p/, then put their tongues in the position for /l/, and then release the /p/ by opening the lips.

21. This sort of practice should be done slowly at first (for instance, the stop for the plosive can be held for quite a time before being released, and during this time the students can make sure that their organs of speech are in the right position for the next element in the cluster). But ultimately normal speed is the aim. Unless a student can pronounce a cluster effortlessly, at normal speed, without having to think about it, he does not 'know' that cluster—or, in other words, he has not got a real command of it. The steps should be: (i) recognition of the new cluster by ear; (ii) conscious practice of the new cluster, at first very slowly; and (iii) practice and over-practice, once the cluster has been consciously mastered, until its correct use becomes unconscious.

22. Finally, a word of warning. Before starting work on pronunciation, a teacher should be clear about his aims. Does he want the student to be able to speak English with such a good pronunciation that native English speakers will accept him as 'one of themselves'? Or does he want him to speak with a pronunciation that will make him internationally intelligible, but nothing more? Or does he merely want him to be able to pronounce English rapidly after *some* fashion, so that he is not hindered in rapid reading? It is no use spending a lot of time teaching students to pronounce clusters really well if that is not part of the teacher's aims. The degree of proficiency aimed at should fit in with the overall aims.

## Final Clusters<sup>1</sup>

Here, as in my chapter on initial clusters (see pages 56 to 62), I deal only with the type of English pronunciation found in Professor Daniel Jones's *An English Pronouncing Dictionary* (Dent).

Final clusters can be divided into (i) those that occur at the end of a syllable (e.g. /ŋk/ in *drink*, and /ksθs/ in *sixths*); and (ii) those that themselves form a syllable, because they contain syllabic /l/, /m/, /n/ or /ŋ/ (e.g. /zm/ in *prism*, /snz/ in *listens*, and /kslz/ in *axles*).

It should be noted that some people whose mother tongue is English of the kind dealt with in this chapter break up the following clusters of type (ii), and also certain clusters in rapid speech as indicated in the following lists, by inserting /ə/ between [the] two consonants (e.g. they pronounce *open* as /oupən/ instead of /oupn/; and *special* as /speʃəl/ instead of /speʃl/): /fn/, /kn/, /ml/, /pn/, /vn/, /zm/, /ʃl/, /ʃn/, /ʒl/, /ʒn/, /θl/, /θn/.

One can also divide final clusters into (a) those that occur at the end of a morpheme<sup>2</sup> (e.g. /ndʒ/ in *change*); and (b) those that occur across one or more morpheme boundaries<sup>3</sup> (e.g. /ŋd/ in *hanged*, which is composed of the morphemes *hang* + *-ed*; and /ksθs/ in *sixths*, which is composed of *six* + *-th* + *-s*).

Here is a list containing clusters of all four types, (i), (ii), (a) and (b) (I omit proper nouns):

<sup>1</sup> First published in *English Language Teaching*, Vol. XVII, No. 4, July 1963.

<sup>2</sup> The morphemes which are relevant to this discussion are what are often known as roots (e.g. *warm* in *warmth*) and suffixes (e.g. *-th* in *warmth*, and *-s* in *cats*).

<sup>3</sup> A morpheme boundary is where one morpheme ends and another begins (e.g. where the plus signs occur in the following: *leng* + *-th* + *-en* + *-ed*).

## With Two Consonants

/bd/	rubbed	/lf/	self	/pl/	apple
/bl/	double	/lk/	milk	/pm/	open <sup>1</sup>
/bm/	ribbon <sup>1</sup>	/lm/	film	/pn/	open <sup>2</sup>
/bn/	ribbon <sup>2</sup>	/ln/	kiln	/ps/	collapse
/bz/	rubs	/lp/	help	/pt/	apt
/dl/	middle	/ls/	else	/pθ/	depth
/dn/	sudden	/lt/	belt	/sk/	ask
/dz/	seeds	/lv/	shelve	/sl/	whistle
/dʒ/	edge	/lz/	bells	/sm/	foursome <sup>2</sup>
/dθ/	width	/lʃ/	Welsh	/sn/	listen
/fl/	rifle	/lθ/	wealth	/sp/	wasp
/fn/	often	/md/	climbed	/st/	test
/fs/	laughs	/mf/	triumph	/tl/	bottle
/ft/	soft	/ml/	camel	/tn/	button
/fθ/	fifth	/mp/	camp	/ts/	cats
/gd/	begged	/ms/	glimpse <sup>4</sup>	/tʃ/	catch
/gl/	eagle	/mt/	prompt <sup>4</sup>	/tθ/	width <sup>5</sup>
/gn/	organ <sup>2</sup>	/mz/	comes	/vd/	lived
/gz/	begs	/mθ/	warmth	/vl/	devil
/gŋ/	organ <sup>3</sup>	/nd/	bend	/vn/	even
/kl/	buckle	/nl/	tunnel	/vz/	lives
/kn/	broken <sup>2</sup>	/ns/	tense	/zd/	pleased
/ks/	box	/nt/	tent	/zl/	easel
/kt/	pact	/nz/	bronze	/zm/	prism
/kj/	beckon <sup>3</sup>	/nʃ/	trench <sup>4</sup>	/zn/	prison
/lb/	bulb	/nʒ/	change <sup>4</sup>	/jd/	hanged
/ld/	hold	/nθ/	month	/ŋk/	drink

<sup>1</sup> Here alveolar /n/ becomes labial /m/ under the influence of labial /b/ or /p/. This is an example of assimilation.

<sup>2</sup> In rapid speech.

<sup>3</sup> Here alveolar /n/ becomes velar /ŋ/ under the influence of velar /g/ or /k/. This is an example of assimilation.

<sup>4</sup> Here the middle consonant of a cluster of three disappears. /ltʃ/ becomes /lʃ/, /mps/ becomes /ms/, /mpt/ becomes /mt/, /ndʒ/ becomes /nʒ/, /ntʃ/ becomes /nʃ/, /ntθ/ becomes /nθ/, and /ŋkt/ becomes /ŋt/; i.e. labial /p/ disappears after labial /m/, alveolar /t/ and /d/ disappear after alveolar /l/ or /n/, and velar /k/ disappears after velar /ŋ/.

<sup>5</sup> Here voiced /d/ becomes voiceless /t/ under the influence of voiceless /θ/. This is an example of assimilation.

/ŋt/	instinct <sup>1</sup>	/ʃt/	washed	/θs/	berths
/ŋz/	rings	/ʒd/	rouged	/θt/	berthed
/ŋθ/	strength	/ʒl/	usual	/ðd/	bathed
/rɪ/	rural <sup>2</sup>	/ʒn/	vision	/ðm/	fathom <sup>2</sup>
/ʃl/	special	/θl/	lethal	/ðn/	southern <sup>2</sup>
/ʃn/	caution	/θn/	earthen	/ðz/	baths

## With Three Consonants

/bld/	troubled	/fnd/	softened	/ksθ/	sixth
/blz/	troubles	/fnt/	elephant <sup>3</sup>	/kts/	acts
/bmd/	beribboned <sup>3</sup>	/fnz/	softens	/kŋd/	beckoned <sup>5</sup>
/bmz/	ribbons <sup>3</sup>	/fts/	lifts	/kŋz/	beckons <sup>5</sup>
/bnd/	beribboned <sup>3</sup>	/ftθ/	fifth <sup>4</sup>	/kwl/	equal <sup>2</sup>
/bnz/	ribbons <sup>2</sup>	/fθs/	fifths	/lbz/	bulbs
/brl/	liberal <sup>2</sup>	/gld/	struggled	/ldn/	golden
/dld/	muddled	/glz/	struggles	/ldz/	builds
/dlz/	muddles	/gnd/	brigand <sup>2</sup>	/ldʒ/	bulge
/dnd/	maddened	/gnl/	signal <sup>2</sup>	/lfs/	wolf's
/dns/	evidence	/gnz/	organs <sup>2</sup>	/lft/	wolfed
/dnt/	rodent	/gŋz/	organs <sup>5</sup>	/lfθ/	twelfth
/dnz/	maddens	/kld/	tackled	/lks/	milks
/drl/	cathedral <sup>2</sup>	/klz/	tackles	/lkt/	milked
/dst/	midst	/knd/	beckoned <sup>2</sup>	/lmd/	filmed
/dzd/	adzed	/knl/	cracknel <sup>2</sup>	/lmz/	films
/dʒd/	judged	/knt/	vacant <sup>2</sup>	/lns/	ambulance <sup>2</sup>
/dʒl/	cudgel	/knz/	beckons <sup>2</sup>	/lnz/	kilns
/dʒn/	pigeon	/ksl/	axle	/lpl/	scalpel
/dθs/	widths	/ksm/	buxom <sup>2</sup>	/lps/	helps
/fld/	shuffled	/ksn/	oxen	/lpt/	helped
/flz/	shuffles	/kst/	text	/lst/	waltzed

<sup>1</sup> See page 64, footnote 4.<sup>2</sup> See page 64, footnote 2.<sup>3</sup> See page 64, footnote 1.<sup>4</sup> This is the opposite phenomenon of that dealt with in footnote 4, page 64. Here an intrusive consonant is inserted between two others. /fθ/ becomes /ftθ/, /mθ/ becomes /mpθ/, and /ŋθ/ becomes /ŋkθ/; i.e. dental /t/ is inserted after labio-dental /f/, labial /p/ is inserted after labial /m/, and velar /k/ is inserted after velar /ŋ/.<sup>5</sup> See page 64, footnote 3.

/ltn/	molten	/ntl/	gentle	/spl/	gospel
/lts/	belts	/nts/	wants	/sps/	wasps
/ltʃ/	belch	/ntʃ/	bunch	/spt/	gasped
/lvd/	shelved	/ntθ/	thousandth	/stl/	pistol
/lvz/	shelves	/nzd/	bronzed	/sts/	masts
/lʃt/	belched <sup>1</sup>	/nʃl/	essential	/tld/	bottled
/lθs/	healths	/nʃn/	mention	/tlz/	bottles
/mbl/	humble	/nʃt/	bunched <sup>1</sup>	/tnd/	buttoned
/mfl/	triumphal	/nθs/	months	/tns/	quittance
/mfs/	triumphs	/pfl/	hopeful	/tnt/	mightn't
/mft/	triumphed	/pld/	dappled	/tnz/	buttons
/mld/	trammelled	/plz/	apples	/trl/	neutral <sup>3</sup>
/mlz/	camels	/pmd/	opened <sup>4</sup>	/tst/	blitzed
/mpl/	crumple	/pmz/	opens <sup>4</sup>	/tʃl/	satchel
/mpn/	dampen <sup>3</sup>	/pnd/	opened	/tʃn/	kitchen
/mps/	camps	/pnl/	shrapnel <sup>3</sup>	/tʃt/	watched
/mpt/	prompt	/pns/	halfpence	/tθs/	widths <sup>5</sup>
/mpθ/	warmth <sup>2</sup>	/pnz/	opens	/vld/	devilled
/mst/	glimpsed <sup>1</sup>	/psl/	topsail	/vlz/	devils
/mts/	prompts <sup>1</sup>	/pst/	lapsed	/vnd/	leavened
/mzl/	damsel	/pts/	crypts	/vnt/	haven't
/mzn/	crimson	/pθs/	depths	/vnz/	sevens
/ndl/	candle	/skl/	rascal	/vnθ/	seventh
/ndn/	abandon	/sks/	asks	/vrl/	several <sup>3</sup>
/ndz/	hands	/skt/	asked	/zld/	puzzled
/ndʒ/	change	/sld/	whistled	/zlx/	puzzles
/nld/	channelled	/slt/	basalt		ample-
/nlz/	channels	/slz/	pencils	/zmd/	bosomed
/nrl/	mineral <sup>3</sup>	/smz/	foursomes <sup>3</sup>	/zml/	dismal
/nsł/	pencil	/snd/	listened	/zmz/	prisms
/nsm/	handsome <sup>3</sup>	/sns/	nuisance	/znd/	imprisoned
/nsn/	ensign	/snt/	mustn't	/znl/	seasonal
/nst/	against	/snz/	listens	/zns/	presence

<sup>1</sup> See page 64, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> See page 65, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> See page 64, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> See page 64, footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> See page 64, footnote 5.

/znt/	doesn't	/nkθ/	strength <sup>2</sup>	/ʃnz/	fashions
/znz/	prisons	/ŋts/	instincts <sup>1</sup>	/ʒnd/	occasioned
/znθ/	thousandth <sup>1</sup>	/ŋθn/	strengthen	/ʒnl/	occasional
/ŋgl/	angle	/ŋθs/	lengths	/ʒnz/	occasions
/ŋkl/	uncle	/ʃld/	marshalled	/θlz/	brothels
/ŋkn/	drunken <sup>3</sup>	/ʃlz/	officials	/ðmd/	fathomed <sup>3</sup>
/ŋks/	banks	/ʃnd/	fashioned	/ðmz/	fathoms <sup>3</sup>
/ŋkt/	banked	/ʃnl/	sessional	/rld/	herald <sup>3</sup>

## With Four Consonants

/dnts/	rodents	/mplz/	crumples	/nvnt/	convent
/dʒld/	cudgelled	/mpnd/	dampened	/nʃlz/	essentials
/dʒlz/	cudgels	/mpnz/	dampens	/nʃnz/	mentions
/dʒnd/	bludgeoned	/mpst/	glimpsed	/pslz/	topsails
/dʒnl/	regional <sup>3</sup>	/mpts/	tempts	/sklz/	rascals
/dʒnz/	pigeons	/mrld/	emerald <sup>3</sup>	/splz/	gospels
/ftθs/	fifths <sup>2</sup>	/mzlz/	damsels	/stlz/	pistols
/gndz/	brigands <sup>3</sup>	/mznd/	crimsoned	/stns/	assistance
/gnld/	signalled <sup>3</sup>	/mznz/	damsons	/stnt/	distant
/gnlz/	signals <sup>3</sup>	/ndld/	handled	/tʃlz/	satchels
/ksld/	axed	/ndlz/	candles	/vnθs/	sevenths
/kslz/	axles	/ndnd/	abandoned	/zndz/	thousands
/kstn/	sexton	/ndnt/	attendant	/zntθ/	thousandth
/ksts/	texts	/ndnz/	abandons	/znθs/	thousandths <sup>1</sup>
/ksθs/	sixths	/ndʒd/	changed	/ŋgld/	dangled
/ldʒd/	bulged	/ndʒl/	angel	/ŋglz/	dangles
/lfθs/	twelfths	/nsld/	pencilled	/ŋkld/	rankled
/lpfl/	helpful	/nslz/	pencils	/nklz/	uncles
/lplz/	scalpels	/ntld/	mantled	/ŋkts/	instincts
/ltʃt/	belched	/ntlz/	mantles	/ŋkθs/	strengths <sup>2</sup>
/mbld/	grumbled		acquain-	/ŋθnd/	lengthened
/mblz/	grumbles	/ntns/	tance	/ŋθnz/	lengthens
/mfnt/	triumphant <sup>3</sup>	/ntʃt/	bunched	/tʃrl/	natural <sup>3</sup>
/mpld/	crumpled	/ntθs/	thousandths		

<sup>1</sup> See page 64, footnote 4.<sup>2</sup> See page 65, footnote 4.<sup>3</sup> See page 64, footnote 2.

## With Five Consonants

/kstnz/ sextons	/nvnts/ convents	/ŋgltn/ singleton
/ndʒlz/ angels	/zntθs/ thousandths	

We here have lists of over 350 final clusters. Obviously we cannot teach them all at the same time. We have to grade them according to their frequency and utility (e.g. /nslz/ is much more frequent and useful than /ln/) and according to their difficulty for our own particular students. If we can find (or make) a list of final clusters in the students' mother-tongue, it will help us to forecast which particular English clusters will present no difficulty, and which will present a lot.

Before beginning to teach a particular cluster, we should, of course, make sure that the students can pronounce the individual consonant sounds of which they are composed.

We should also examine the sounds in the cluster to see whether there is anything unusual about them. For example, in the word *width*, the /d/ or /t/ is not alveolar, as the English /d/ and /t/ usually are, but dental because of the influence of the /θ/ that follows. In other words, the /d/ or /t/ in *width* is pronounced with the tip of the tongue behind the upper teeth, not against the teeth-ridge. A student who tries to pronounce *width* with alveolar /d/ or /t/ is making things unnecessarily difficult for himself, and if the teacher can forestall this, the student will benefit.

The teacher should also notice where there are alternative pronunciations which make it easier for the student to pronounce the word concerned. The third paragraph of this chapter, for example, mentions cases where a cluster can be avoided by the insertion of /ə/, which may be easier for the student.

I have described the technique I use for teaching a new sound elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The same technique can be used for teaching a new final cluster. In brief, it consists of first training the student to *hear* the difference between this cluster and other clusters or individual sounds when pronounced in words or sentences; then training

<sup>1</sup> 'Some Uses of the Tape-Recorder In and Outside the English Classroom', *English Language Teaching*, Vol. XV, No. 3, April-June 1961, included in this selection, pp. 134-8.

him to *pronounce* the cluster himself sufficiently accurately to avoid confusing the listener; and finally getting him to practise and overpractise it until he can pronounce it without having to think about it, when he needs it in the course of speaking. Being able to *hear* the difference between two sounds is a very great help in *pronouncing* them differently; and plenty of practice is essential to real mastery. The ability to pronounce something accurately once or twice in class, with the help of the teacher and while concentrating on that particular sound, does *not* constitute mastery of it.

As in the case of initial clusters, final clusters in English are characterized by very close transition from one consonant sound to the next. This can best be practised by starting with the shorter clusters and building up (e.g. *rang*, *rank*, *rankle*, *rankles* can form a chain); and by practising in slow motion at first—pronouncing each sound in the cluster slowly (except for the plosives, which cannot be slowed down), but not allowing any other sounds to intrude.

To ensure that the transition is close, the organs of speech usually take up the position of the next consonant before releasing the previous one. In /bd/ for example, the tip of the tongue takes up the position for /d/ before the lips open to release the /b/. In /bl/, the sides of the tongue are raised against the upper side teeth before the lips open to release the /b/. In /bm/, the lips do not open at all, the air being released through the nose by lowering the soft palate between /b/ and /m/. In /bn/, the tip of the tongue is in position for /n/ before the lips open and the soft palate simultaneously drops to release the air up the nose. In /bz/, the tip of the tongue is in position for /z/ before the lips open to release the /b/. And so on.

Teachers can find details of these phenomena in books on phonetics under 'nasal plosion' (this is when the air is released through the nose instead of through the mouth), 'lateral plosion' (this is when the air is released with the sides of the tongue raised against the upper side teeth), and 'incomplete plosion' (this is when the position for a second plosive consonant is taken up before the previous plosive one has been released).

## The Mythology of English Teaching<sup>1</sup>

During my many visits to school and university classes in various countries, I have come across a number of myths connected with the teaching of English. I shall list and describe fourteen of them here.

*Myth No. 1. That students can learn to appreciate great English literature and derive cultural and spiritual benefit from it by being made to read texts that they cannot understand*

To my mind, a certain minimum of comprehension of the language in which the texts are written is necessary before the students can derive any benefits from reading them. How can a student feel the beauty of the rhythms, the assonance and the other sound effects in a poem; how can he appreciate the felicities in the author's selection of words, use of inversion, etc.; and how can he respond to the other beauties of the author's style if the text is full of words and grammatical patterns that he cannot make head or tail of?

*Myth No. 2. That grammatical analysis helps the students to write better English*

One often hears the argument from old people in important jobs in former British colonies, 'I studied English through grammatical analysis, and I can write it far better than this new generation who no longer do grammar!' The fallacies here are obvious: these old people started English at the age of 5 or 6; they studied for ten years or more through the English medium; and they were exceptionally gifted, otherwise they would not now hold important jobs. Under such conditions, they would have learnt good English from their geography teachers, their history teachers and all their other teachers even if they had had no specific English lessons at all. What they were taught in their English classes is therefore irrelevant

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Teaching English*, Vol. VI, No. 4, August 1961.

when we are considering the problems of teaching English to vast numbers of students, gifted and dull, who start English perhaps at the age of 11 or 12, study it only for 4, 5 or 6 years, and hear it only in their English classes.

Of course, students must learn to use the language grammatically; but that is done by guided practice, not by theory and analysis. Experiments conducted by educational psychologists in England have shown a very low correlation between ability to score high marks in grammatical analysis and ability to write good English.

Furthermore, a lot of what is taught as English grammar in schools is incorrect or obsolete. For example, there is no grammatical distinction between concrete and abstract nouns in English; the differences between the Present Perfect, Past Perfect and Past Definite tenses are not that the first refers to recent past, the second to distant past, and the third to something in between; *He is taller than me* is not wrong by modern standards; *I will* does not differ from *I shall* in contemporary English; a sentence which is good English in the active in a particular context is automatically bad English in the passive in that context, therefore conversion exercises from active to passive are not only useless but actually harmful; and so on.

*Myth No. 3. The importance of reading aloud (often wrongly called 'loud reading')* ◦

What is the value of reading aloud around the class? It gets through, say, 35 minutes with the minimum amount of effort on the part of the teacher; but what good does it do the students? If there is a class of 35 students and if the teacher does not speak at all, each student will spend 34 minutes listening to his fellow-students reading with bad pronunciation, bad stress, bad rhythm and bad intonation. This cannot, of course, improve his own pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. In addition, he himself will have one minute's practice reading aloud (*one minute!*). What will he learn from that? He will practise his usual mistakes of pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation, with occasional, desultory corrections from the teacher, which will not make a sufficiently strong impact on his unconscious to eradicate his wrong habits.

What can we do to give the students more efficient practice in pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation? We can do ear and

speech training work, which can largely be done chorally, so that all students are practising simultaneously.

The only exception I make to my objection to reading aloud is in the case of poetry. The essence of poetry is sound—rhythm, assonance and the rest. The students must hear the teacher read the poem aloud at least twice, with as much rhythm and effect as he can manage; they should then read it aloud themselves in chorus, with the teacher guiding (but not correcting) them when they begin to go astray; and finally individuals may be asked to read parts or the whole of the poem alone. These readings should not be done until the teacher has presented the new vocabulary and grammatical patterns contained in the poem, so that when the students hear him reading it aloud the first time, they can understand most of it.

#### *Myth No. 4. The importance of free composition*

If we give our students free compositions to do before they know enough English to do them properly, we are not only wasting their time and ours (corrections!), we are doing active harm to the students' English. What happens is that the students think of what they want to say in their mother tongue (e.g. Hindi); then they translate it mentally into, say, Hindi English; and then they write it down. It is, of course, full of mistakes, and, unfortunately, every time a student writes something down—whether it is right or wrong—the action of writing it down imprints it more strongly on his memory, so that next time he is more likely to write it that way again. Equally unfortunately, the impression made on his memory by seeing the teacher's correction (*visual impression*) cannot be as strong as the kinaesthetic impression of writing the original mistake. Even if the teacher makes the student copy out the correct sentence five times, this does not make a sufficiently strong impression, in most cases, to remove a mistake which has been practised many more times than five. In any case, the copying of the correct sentence is usually done mechanically, without the student's brain being much involved.

What should we then do? We should begin with *controlled* composition, in which the student practises writing what he has already learnt, until he knows enough to be able to launch forth into free composition.

What about the training that composition gives in collecting,

arranging and presenting ideas? That training should, of course, be given first in the mother tongue.

*Myth No. 5. The importance of the text or reader*

For most teachers, examiners and educational officials, 'The Text' is holy: English teaching consists of going through the textbook and making sure that the student learns its contents as thoroughly as is possible. But this does not in fact *teach* English: reading is only a small part of the problem (say 25 per cent); before students can derive benefit from reading, they must be *taught* the words, idioms and grammatical structures which they will find in the reading lesson.

How does one do this teaching? By presenting the words, idioms and structures to the students in meaningful situations; and then getting them to practise them, also in meaningful situations. After these things have been done, reading pieces containing these words, idioms and structures can be used as a means of consolidating them and to give the students practice in the useful skill of rapid reading for comprehension.

*Myth No. 6. The importance of learning the English 'Alphabets' (incidentally, English has only one alphabet: A, B and C are not 'alphabets', but 'letters of the alphabet')*

It is customary to teach the students the alphabet (A, B, C, . . . X, Y, Z) before teaching them to read and write. This is not only very boring, but unnecessary. Students can learn to read sentences first, and then individual words; and finally they can be taught to identify individual letters. This can be done very easily, and it is much more interesting for the students. They can learn the order of the letters (A, B, C, etc.) when they start using a dictionary, because then it is necessary to know it.

As for writing, they can be taught the basic movements required to form English capital letters and small letters as a *sort* of art exercise. Then they can be taught to form the letters by combining the lines and curves and circles which they have learnt to make; and finally this skill can be related to their reading work. In this method, the children learn to form the letters in groups which are related in shape: e.g. O, Q, C, G, S all have an anti-clockwise curve as their beginning, and they are arranged in progressive order.

*Myth No. 7. The value of conversion exercises*

Many syllabuses in English contain provision for grammatical exercises of the conversion type: e.g. singular to plural, present to past tense, active to passive, and direct to reported speech. Students are given practice in performing tricks of this kind on a series of isolated sentences such as these:

Active: *He always washes his hands before sitting down to eat.*

Passive: *His hands are always washed by him before sitting down to eat (!)*

Active: *Does your little girl dress herself yet?*

Passive: *Is herself dressed by your little girl yet (!!)*

Direct Speech: *The man said, 'If you want to know the way to the station, ask that policeman over there.'* Reported Speech: *The man told me (or you, or him, or us, or them) to ask that policeman (which one?) over there (where?), if I (or you, or he or she, or we, or they) wanted to know the way to the station.*

A grammatical exercise is useful only if one can prove that it has a carry-over to real life; i.e. if, after a student has, for instance, converted twenty sentences from the present into the past tense, he then uses these tenses more accurately in his own speech and writing. Experiments made in Britain have shown that there is a very low correlation between students' ability to perform such tricks on isolated sentences and their ability to use the same things correctly in writing compositions.

*Myth No. 8. The usefulness of teaching lists of 'idioms'*

What is an idiom? Some people include under this term such uses as *come across* (meaning *meet*), *on foot*, *by air* and *one by one*, where it is not enough just to know the meanings of the individual words in order to be able to use these expressions correctly.

Other people mean by idioms only things like *to force someone to do something at the sword's point*, *not to let grass grow under one's feet* and *to put one's best foot forward*.

If we accept the first of these two definitions of idioms, it is obvious that they should be taught: they should be collected, graded and presented, just as grammatical structures and vocabulary items are, as part of the ordinary English course (not as a separate activity) from the beginning of the first year of English to the end of the last.

But if by idioms we mean proverbs, literary metaphors and so on, we must be cautious. We must ask ourselves, 'What use are these "idioms" going to be to our students? In what way will a knowledge of such an expression as *the apple of one's eye* help a future student of engineering—or even medicine?'

We must remember, too, that there are thousands of such 'idioms'. I have before me a dictionary of them which is over three hundred pages long. There are over a dozen on each page. Is a pre-university course on 'idioms' which covers less than a hundred, many of them old-fashioned or highly literary, going to help the average student? Usually the selection is made quite arbitrarily by some University professor, who chooses ones which have taken his fancy in his reading of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century authors. No attempt is made to choose only ones which are really used by present-day speakers of English. That is why we find many highly-educated people whose mother tongue is not English using the quaintest and most hilariously old-fashioned expressions in their everyday speech and writings.

#### *Myth No. 9. The importance of full answers*

*Teacher*: 'Did *you* have a holiday yesterday?' (stressing *you*).

*Student*: 'Yes, I had a holiday yesterday' (slight stress on *yesterday*).

The teacher is happy because the student has given the 'right' answer. But is it the right answer? No, it is not. If, in real life, an English person were to answer that question in that way, people would think he was slightly mad. The correct answer is 'Yes', or 'Yes, I did'.

A full answer is usually *not* good English; and if we do give one, we must be careful that it is correctly stressed, otherwise the whole thing becomes a meaningless, mechanical exercise. The normal, good answer to a question is the short answer: e.g. 'What do you want to have for supper this evening?' 'Rice and ~~cards~~.'

How then can our students practise full sentences? By giving them oral drills in meaningful situations. E.g. the teacher puts a piece of chalk on his table, and the students say, 'There's a piece of chalk on your table.' Then he draws a circle on the blackboard and they say, 'There's a circle on the blackboard'; next he points to a student's bag lying on the floor and they say, 'There's a bag on the

floor', etc. Such drill can be done quite rapidly if the teacher has prepared it carefully, and it gives each student the maximum talking time, since the teacher does not speak and the students respond in chorus or in groups.

*Myth No. 10. The importance of full forms*

The teacher sees:

‘I’d give him some hay,  
And I’d give him some corn,  
And he’d be the best donkey  
That ever was born.’

The teacher proceeds to read this aloud, changing *I’d* to *I would* and *he’d* to *he would*. The original rhythm of the poem is thus effectually destroyed. (I have heard the opposite happening too—a teacher ruining the rhythm of a poem by changing *wouldn’t* and *shouldn’t* into monosyllables by omitting the *d* sound.)

The contracted forms *can’t*, *I’ll*, *he’d*, etc., are the normal forms in spoken English; whereas the full forms, *cannot*, *I will* (or *shall*), *he would* (or *had*), etc., are usual in writing, unless one is reporting the words a person actually spoke. It is therefore quite wrong to change contracted forms into full forms when reading aloud; if anything, one should change full forms into contracted ones.

*Myth No. 11. The importance of the marks which one fixes as pass-marks in examinations*

Sometimes teachers argue about whether the pass-mark for an examination should be 30, or 35, or 40, or some other percentage. Such arguments are meaningless, since any pass-mark which one fixes is arbitrary. An examiner can mark the students' answer papers as leniently or as severely as he wishes: if the pass mark is 35 per cent, he will mark the papers twice as severely as if the pass mark is 70 per cent, so the numbers passing will be the same. What is important is the *standard* of the examination; i.e. what skills the student needs, and up to what level he needs to have them in order to get a bare pass. What vocabulary, what idioms and what grammatical structures, for instance, is he expected to be able to use actively?

*Myth No. 12. Teaching a perfect pronunciation*

It is impossible for a teacher to teach a better pronunciation than his own. If he speaks 'Tamil English', he cannot teach his students to speak 'Oxford English', or 'American English', or 'Delhi Secretariat English', or anything except 'Tamil English'.

What a conscientious teacher can do is to learn to speak with a pronunciation that is *internationally intelligible*, and then teach his students to do the same. That is an objective that *can* be attained.

*Myth No. 13. Learning stress and intonation by 'absorbing' them*

If a young student were to live in an English-speaking country for a few years, he would absorb the stress and intonation habits of that country; but if he hears English only for a few hours a week in his English class in—say—Pathankot, he will not manage to 'absorb' good habits of stress and intonation merely by random listening to his teacher and to his fellow-students. If the teacher really wishes to teach his students good stress and intonation habits, he must go about the task purposefully and systematically. First of all, he must have full control of his own stress and intonation, so that he is consistent in his use of patterns. If once he says, 'This is a book', with the main stress on *book*, and a falling intonation on that word; then next time he says, 'This—is—a—book', with a rising intonation on each word except the last, and a pause after each word; and then next time, 'This is a—book', with a rise on *a* and then a pause for the students to complete the sentence, the students will naturally be utterly confused and will never learn correct, natural stress and intonation. If, on the contrary, they always hear, 'This is a book', with no pauses, the main stress on *book* and an intonation fall on the same word, there is a good chance that they will themselves learn this pattern.

The worst enemy of good stress and intonation habits is reading aloud from a text that is too difficult for the students to understand (compare Myth No. 3, above).

*Myth No. 14. The need to read the number of the lesson and the title of the piece aloud before reading the piece itself*

Student: 'Lesson XIV, The Donkey. If I had a donkey', etc.  
This is mere pedantry. Why stop at the number of the lesson?

Why not give the name of the book, its author, publisher and price and the number of the page as well? This is as bad as the common practice of wasting time writing the designation of the class, the number of students in the class, the number present, the date, the subject and the branch of the subject to be studied in that lesson (e.g. Composition) on the blackboard before starting the lesson.

## A Survey of Teaching Methods in English<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Aims and Means

The methods we use to teach a subject ought to vary according to what our aims are. If, for instance, we want to teach somebody the theory of riding a bicycle, including such things as gravity, wind resistance, ratios and so on, we will use a different method from the one we will use if what we want to do is to teach him how to ride a bicycle. Theory may be interesting to a boy who wants to learn to ride a bicycle, but it is of no practical help to him.

Similarly, if we want to teach pupils to use a language, we will give them practice in using it, and we will realize that any theory we give them will be of no real assistance to them, however interesting it may be.

Now, do we want to teach our pupils to understand English when they hear it; or to speak it in such a way that people can understand them; or to read books rapidly and understand them; or to write English accurately enough to make themselves clearly understood; or to translate books from English into their own language? All these are possible aims. We have to divide them up still further: are we training our pupils to understand the English spoken by their fellow-countrymen and to make themselves understood to these people; or are we training them to understand the English spoken by the British, American, Japanese, Mexican, Russian and other people and to make themselves understood by such people? Our methods will vary according to our aims.

#### ✓ UNDERSTANDING SPOKEN ENGLISH

If we want to train our pupils to understand English when they hear

<sup>1</sup> A lecture, first published in *Teacher Education*, Delhi, Vol. III, No. 2, February 1959.

it spoken, we must give them practice in this: they learn to understand what they hear by listening. We must give them ear-training exercises and we must accustom them right from the beginning to hearing and understanding normal English speech—that is, not classroom English, in which every sentence is broken up into separate words—My name is Ram—but English in which words run into each other and the normal weakenings occur—My name's Ram. We can start slowly, but that does not mean that we have to break words up and use unnatural intonations. Pupils learn to understand the type of English they are given practice in hearing: they cannot possibly learn to understand real English if they are given no chance of hearing it. Classroom English is not a good preparation for it. It is even a mistake to think that classroom English is easier than real English. I repeat that pupils learn what they are given a chance of hearing. Provided one speaks loudly, clearly, and slowly, any kind of English is equally easy or difficult.

#### SPEAKING ENGLISH

As for teaching pupils to speak in such a way that they can be understood, this falls into two parts: we must teach them to make the sounds (including the rhythm and intonation patterns) well enough for them to be understood; and we must teach them to use the right words and the right grammatical patterns when they speak. To teach them the sounds, we must first give them plenty of listening practice: it is a fact that being able to hear differences between sounds and being able to make the differences between the same sounds are very closely connected. Until you learn to hear the difference between, for example, *bed* and *bad*, or *court* and *cart*, or *sew* and *show*, it is practically impossible to pronounce them differently, except sometimes by luck. So ear-training should come before speech-training. When speech-training starts, I think we should not aim at perfection. With a large class of pupils we know very well that we shall never be able to teach them to speak with a perfect Oxford, or New York, or New Delhi accent. So, if we can find out what differences between sounds are absolutely essential for understanding and if we can then discover which of these differences are difficult for our pupils, we can concentrate on these, and thus save a very great amount of time. By systematically working away at these difficulties, we can hope to achieve the aim of international intelligibility.

bility for the majority of our pupils, instead of failing to achieve anything very much by aiming at perfection.

As for teaching pupils to choose their words and their grammatical patterns correctly when they speak, this is a question of careful selection of what we teach the pupils; followed by careful arrangement of these things in an order for teaching, so that we can teach one thing at a time; followed by careful presentation of each of these things in such a way that the pupils can grasp it; followed by lots of drill so that it can be fixed in the pupils' memory; followed by revision from time to time so that it will remain there. Conversations can help too.

#### READING WITH COMPREHENSION

The third aim I mentioned earlier was to teach our pupils to read books rapidly and understand them. This is perhaps the most useful skill we can teach them. Strangely enough, most experts nowadays think that the best way to begin to achieve this aim is by an oral approach, teaching people to understand certain words and structures by ear, and then to speak them before they are expected to read them. In the first stages of learning English, this seems to be the ideal order. It means that the pupils are never asked to read something containing words or structures which they are not already familiar with from having heard and spoken them, so that their task is simply to recognize on the written page what they already know in the world of sounds. In the earliest stage this includes recognizing the shapes on paper which correspond to the words and sentences they know by ear.

Pupils become expert at reading rapidly and understanding by practising reading rapidly and understanding, so if we want our pupils to become expert in this skill, we must give them plenty of suitable practice. We can set them to read a certain passage, and time them to see how long they take to finish it. To test their comprehension, we can give them questions either before or after we get them to read the piece. Instead of questions, we can give them new-type objective tests (multiple-choice, right-wrong, etc.).

#### WRITING ACCURATELY

To train pupils to write accurately, we must give them plenty of practice in writing accurately. Every time a pupil makes a mistake

in writing, he is practising that mistake: it is becoming more firmly fixed in his mind. Therefore we should try to arrange that he does not make many mistakes. How can we do this? By not encouraging him to use any words or structures which he has not practised again and again by hearing them, using them in speech, and reading them.

The writing skill has three main divisions: the pupil has to know how to form the letters; he has to know how to spell; and he has to be able to choose the right words and structures for what he wants to say. The forms of the letters can be taught gradually, starting with exercise on straight lines and curves, as a change from the early oral work. Spelling can be practised by giving the pupils a lot of careful delayed copying<sup>1</sup> work to do in the early stages. And the limitation of words and structures to those well known by the pupils can be done by giving controlled compositions, in which the ideas are supplied, and all the pupil has to do is to remember correct English ways of expressing them.

#### TRANSLATING INTO THE MOTHER TONGUE

The translation skill is, I am convinced, a separate skill from the four others. I have had a lot of experience of translation work and am certain in my own mind that translation is not at all a good test of comprehension or composition. It is possible to be bilingual in two languages and yet to be a bad translator from one to the other. Translations, then, do not show one's command of either language. On the other hand, it is possible for someone who knows a foreign language far less well than the bilingual person to do much better translations from it into his own language. There are much better ways of testing comprehension and composition than by using translation. Translation also has the disadvantage of keeping the link between the pupil's own language and English alive in his mind, whereas it is essential for fluent command of English that this link should be broken as soon as possible and replaced by a link between the thing referred to and the English word.

I favour translation only as an advanced exercise for people whom one is specially training as translators.

<sup>1</sup> In delayed copying, the pupils look at a sentence, then look away and write it down from memory.

## SUMMARY OF AIMS AND MEANS

So much for the five aims and the means to achieve them. I will summarize them:

Aim 1. To teach our pupils to understand English when they hear it (we have to decide what sort of English we want them to learn to understand);

Aim 2. To teach our pupils to speak in such a way that people can understand them (we have to decide what people);

Aim 3. To teach our pupils to read books rapidly and understand them;

Aim 4. To teach our pupils to write English accurately enough to make themselves clearly understood;

Aim 5 (which I would make advanced and optional). To train our pupils to translate.

Means to achieve Aim 1. Listening practice with normal English; Ear-training exercises.

Means to achieve Aim 2. Speech-training (preceded by ear-training); Oral vocabulary and structure drills; Conversations.

Means to achieve Aim 3. Training in recognition of the shapes of words known orally; Comprehension tests, written within the vocabulary and structures known to the students through oral work.

Means to achieve Aim 4. Practice in forming the letters; Copying, at first mechanically and then varying the model to suit the particular situation (e.g. Model: *I am wearing a blue shirt* altered to *I am wearing a white shirt* by pupils whose shirts are white, etc.); A graded course of controlled composition.

Means to achieve Aim 5. A graded course of translations, starting from very simple ones and keeping within the words and structures known to the pupils.

## USE OF THE DICTIONARY

Another thing which we could well train our pupils to do as they become more advanced is to use a dictionary properly: we cannot go on grading and controlling vocabulary forever: after the 2,500,

or 3,000 word level, this is no longer profitable. The gap between this vocabulary and a vocabulary of 30,000 words, which is what one needs for reading the average unsimplified English work, is so enormous that it is quite impossible to cover it in class. What we can do, however, is to teach the pupils how to look up words which they do not know and which they come across in their reading after they have left simplified texts. One of the best dictionaries to use for this purpose is the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* by Hornby, Gatenby and Wakefield.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. What is the Structural Approach?

The old idea of teaching languages was to start with the regular nouns, then go on to the irregular ones (e.g. *man/men, mouse/mice, formula/formulae, datum/data, etc.*), then to pronouns, then to adjectives, and so on. At each step, all the words of the type dealt with were introduced: for instance, *louse* and *lice*, *tiro* and *tiros*, *coat-of-mail* and *coats-of-mail*, *seraph* and *seraphim*, and countless other rare words came into subsequent lessons because they were examples of irregular plurals.

After morphology had been dealt with, the book went on to syntax, which dealt with word-order and with the uses of the different parts of speech discussed under morphology—when to use each case of the noun, when to use the definite article, when to use the indefinite article, when to use the past tense, when to use the subjunctive, how to form the interrogative and negative, and so on. Everything was arranged in a strictly grammatical order, without any regard for difficulty or ease of learning. Students were supposed to learn rules and lists of exceptions by heart, and then to apply these in translation exercises from their own language into the foreign language, and vice versa. Exercises of this kind were given at the end of each lesson. The fact that it was necessary to use verbs and articles in these exercises before verbs and articles had been taught did not worry the compilers of the books; they just gave a translation of anything embarrassing of this kind, either in brackets after the word concerned, or in a word-list at the beginning of the exercise.

<sup>1</sup> London: Oxford University Press, Second Edition, 1963.

Some teachers succeeded in teaching a language in this way, by a liberal use of the cane or by other means. But the sort of language they taught was far removed from the sort needed for real life. Students who could translate Shakespeare and recite the principal parts of every irregular verb in the English language including *smite/smote/smitten, writhe/writched/writhen* (or *writched*), found themselves unable to ask for a cup of coffee when they visited England. Those people who learnt by this method and who later became fluent in English actually had to *relearn* the language after they left school.

#### THE DIRECT METHOD

When it became clear to certain people that it was very difficult for students to learn a language by working through the grammar, learning rules and lists of exceptions, and doing translation exercises, a reaction set in. This was the so-called Direct Method, which tried to follow the same lines as those which we followed when we learnt our own language as children. It banned the use of translation, and stressed practice instead of theory. Students learnt to speak by speaking, to understand by listening, to read by reading, and so on. They were plunged straight into the language, at first in a simple form, and then in a progressively more difficult form. This was also sometimes called the Natural Method.

#### VOCABULARY SELECTION

Unfortunately this also did not seem to work too well. Students who had a foreign language poured over them in large doses did not seem to absorb as much of it as was desired. So the next step taken was to select and grade vocabulary very carefully. This was the period of Vocabulary Selection. Researches were made to discover the frequency of words, and textbooks were written for teaching languages, in which the vocabulary was graded according to its frequency, its utility and its teachability.

This, however, was also found not to work as well as had been hoped. Although the words were selected and graded, students still had great difficulties. This was because, even though they knew all the words in a sentence, they could not understand what the sentence meant. The reasons were that (i) most words have more than one meaning (some have dozens of meanings); (ii) there are a

large number of idioms in every language; for instance, if one knows the meaning of *leather* and the meaning of *jacket*, it does not follow that one will know the meaning of *leatherjacket* (which is a kind of insect); and (iii) what cause most difficulty in a language are not the actual words, but the ways in which they combine into sentences; for instance, a student may have learnt the words *if, you, had, been, reading, he, would, not, have, come* and *in*, but he would not be able to combine them into a sentence unless he had learnt the structure *if . . . had been . . . ing, . . . would have (done)*.

#### THE STRUCTURAL APPROACH

This discovery led on to the so-called Structural Approach, which consists of selecting and grading the structures of a language rather than the words. Of course, words are also selected and graded, but the main emphasis is put on teaching the students a command of the structures. Once they know these frames or patterns, they can fit words into them easily enough. For instance, once they know the pattern *If . . . had been . . . ing, . . . would have (done)*, they can easily learn words to put into the blanks and brackets; but if they only know lists of words, they cannot possibly speak, understand, read or write a sentence.

Strictly speaking, the Structural Approach should deal not only with sentence patterns (syntactical structures), but also with such things as the sound patterns of a language (phonological structures), the patterns of words (how they are built up from smaller pieces, or morphological structures), different meanings of words and patterns, and idioms. All these should be selected and graded.

Now, what is the Structural Approach not? It is not a method of teaching: it is an approach. Any method can be used with it. Once the structures have been selected and graded, it would be possible to teach them by grammar and translation, or by the Direct Method, or by any other method one could think of.

#### THE ORAL APPROACH

It happens that the Structural Approach grew up at a time when the Oral Approach was popular, so it is usually linked with that. The Oral Approach is based on the belief that the easiest way to learn a language, even if ultimately you want only to be able to read it, is to start orally—the teacher presenting all new material orally,

with the students only listening, and then the students using it themselves in speech, before any reading or writing of the material is attempted. With younger pupils it is usually advised that no reading or writing at all should be done for the first month or months, so that the pupils can become really fluent within a small vocabulary and within a small group of structures before they go on to the written language.

The idea behind this is that it is more natural to learn to understand what one hears and to speak first; that is how we learnt our own language, and that is the process of history: people could speak for countless thousands of years before writing was invented; and the majority of people in the world still cannot read or write, although most of them can speak with no trouble at all.

Furthermore, when we read a language, or when we write it, our brain sends slight impulses to our organs of speech, which actually help us to actualize what we are reading or writing. If we are not reasonably fluent speakers of a language, we cannot be fluent readers or writers of it.

#### THE DRILL METHOD

Besides the Oral Approach, the Structural Approach is usually linked with the Drill Method. Followers of the Drill Method believe that we learn a thing by hearing it, speaking it, reading it and/or writing it many times. A thing cannot usually stick in our heads if we hear, speak, see or write it only once: only repetition can ensure retention. Until the thing to be learnt is so well known that we can instantaneously recall it when we need it, it is not really known.

In the case of weak, unimaginative teachers, this sometimes degenerates into mechanical repetition of what they want their students to learn: *This is a book, This is a book, This is a book*, etc. But such drill is both extremely boring and inefficient. The brain just ceases to register after a time: the words roll mechanically out of the pupils' minds without any real impression on the brain. Furthermore, the words cease to be associated with any meaning, or any situation in the students' minds. And here we come on to a further link with the Structural Approach.

#### THE SITUATIONAL APPROACH

The Structural Approach is often combined with the Situational

Approach, which means that everything that is taught should be taught in a situation or context that links the words with the thing they refer to. If you want to teach 'This is a book', you should actually take a book and demonstrate to the pupils what you are talking about. The utterance, 'This is a book' should grow out of the situation of having a book and wanting to tell the pupils what its name is in English. The meanings of words and of structures are only the situations in which they can be used. We know the meaning of apple, not because we have looked it up in a dictionary, but because we have heard the word when we have seen an apple, or when we have seen a picture of an apple, or when we have been reading about apples in contexts which require some such thing. If a child had always heard the word apple used when people were handling an orange, and if he had seen pictures of oranges with a text that referred to apples, for him the name of an orange would be apple. We learn to associate words and structures with the real-life things or situations which we always see and hear them associated with. There is nothing mysterious about meaning: it is just that. Most people in Delhi refer to what I call a tangerine as an orange, and what I call an orange as a malta. That is because they have always heard the word orange in association with the fruit I have always heard the word tangerine in association with; and the word malta in association with the fruit which I have always heard referred to as an orange.

Without the Situational Approach, teachers are liable to fall into the mistake of thinking that there is some advantage in drilling words and structures without reference to meaning, which means without putting them in any context. Even drills can be made interesting if they are always made to arise out of a situation. Instead of getting one pupil after another to repeat 'John is not in the garden', when there is nobody called John in the class and there is not a garden in sight, you could have a meaningful drill by writing up the names of the pupils who are absent on the blackboard, and then mentioning names of pupils one by one and getting one pupil at a time to respond with the correct form: e.g. Ram is in this room, Sita is in this room, Ashok isn't in this room, etc. Or you could draw pictures of boys and girls, some in a garden, some outside it. Then you could write a name under the picture of one of the children and get a pupil to respond; e.g. you could write the name John

under the picture of one of the boys who is not in the garden, and the pupil would say, *John isn't in the garden*.

Activity methods, the Project Method, and play methods fit in very well with the Situational Approach, because they are all based on the maxim, 'do and say'.

#### USES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STRUCTURAL APPROACH

Now that we know what the Structural Approach is and also what it is not, we can examine it to see how far it fits into our aims and means. The mere selection and grading of structures will not solve the problems we have. It will help us to prepare materials for the teacher, because it will help us to take one thing at a time, to have the easier things before the more difficult ones, and to have those which can serve as a good basis for teaching other things, coming before the latter. It will also make it much easier for us to keep track of what we have taught at any given point so that we can know

- (i) what we can expect the pupils to have no difficulty with
- (ii) what we should revise.

But the Structural Approach will not provide the teacher with advice on how to present each new teaching point, nor with drills for consolidating it, nor with reading material, nor with material for written exercises. All this has to be prepared, in great detail, if we are to provide the average teacher with what he desperately needs if he is to break the vicious circle. And we must never forget that it is the pupil that should be the centre of our interest, not the material. If an order of grading the structures is excellent in theory, but does not work in practice, because the material which one can write on the basis of it is nonsensical, or terribly boring, or psychologically unsuited to pupils of the target level, we have to change the order of grading, otherwise we will fall into exactly the same sort of trap as the one into which all past methods seem to have fallen: their supporters said, 'Our method is the best because it is the most natural (or the most direct, or something else)'; but then history came along and showed them that they were wrong because, however good their method might be in theory, it just didn't work in the ordinary classroom.

## Neutral English<sup>1</sup>

There is a tendency among many teachers of English abroad, especially in Europe and the British Commonwealth, to assume that English is studied chiefly as a means of becoming acquainted with the life, literature and institutions of the English-speaking peoples. Hence a strong tendency among teachers and textbook writers to try to give a British or an American background to their teaching by providing 'realia' and by introducing their pupils as soon as possible to great English literature.

This attitude is, of course, excellent in the right environment. A knowledge of the life, literature and institutions of another country broadens the minds of the pupils and increases their understanding of the nations whose languages they are studying. But this attitude is by no means a universal one and I think it is important that teachers of English abroad, wherever they are, should take note of a rather recent trend in the opposite direction in certain parts of the world. I first noticed it at the Unesco Seminar on the Contribution of Language-Teaching to Living in a World Community held in Ceylon in 1953. There, the delegates from the continent of Europe strongly stressed the importance of a foreign language as a gateway to the culture of the native speakers of that language (i.e. they stressed 'unilateral' understanding); whereas there was a tendency among the Asian delegates to stress the importance of English as a gateway to mutual understanding and co-operation among *many* countries (i.e. they stressed 'multilateral' understanding, which, after all, is what Unesco stands for).

Since that Seminar, I have worked in one of the 'new' countries of South-East Asia, where I have found this trend strongly evident. English is here the first foreign language and is compulsory in all secondary schools. Two years ago, the Director of the Department

<sup>1</sup> An unpublished article written in 1956.

of Instruction of the Ministry of Education stated quite clearly, in a speech, that English is being taught here entirely in the country's own interests as a tool for international understanding. English, he indicated, is a gateway to Japan, India, Egypt, and many other countries, as well as a gateway to Britain, America, Australia and the rest of the English-speaking world.

I was interested to see that E. V. Gatenby reported a similar trend in his posthumous article in Vol. II, No. 3 of *Teaching English* (published in India for the British Council by Orient Longmans). He said, 'Another idea worthy of note, and perhaps of commendation, is coming to the fore in India, namely, that what is needed for international communication is a form of English with the minimum of English background'; and 'A Yugoslav student, for example, needs English for utilitarian rather than cultural purposes; he wishes to understand, and make himself understood by, other Europeans'.

Gatenby goes on to say that lessons based on English life or poetry are less useful than 'the conversation of travel or the vocabulary of modern ideas'. He suggests that even modern courses with regional backgrounds (e.g. books for teaching English in India which have an entirely Indian background) are not the right answer to the needs of teaching English as a vehicle of international understanding. If, he says, Indians learn English entirely from such books, and Chinese learn it entirely from books with a Chinese background, the needs of international understanding are not served. Gatenby says: 'The modern requirement is a neutral form of English, a language as free from national bias as Esperanto. . . . Starting with neutral English and adapting it, if necessary, to a particular region is a very different process from starting with the English of Oxford and then removing its cultural flavour to fit it for *en tout cas* use.'

Gatenby here puts his finger on the problem in large parts of Asia with brilliant insight (his death at the early age of 63 was a real tragedy for the teaching of English as a foreign language). There are countless millions in Asia who are eager to learn English if they can use it as a gateway to the world. Three paths are open to us: (a) we can try to insist on their learning English in the ways that we ourselves want; (b) we can withdraw and leave the teaching to others; or (c) we can adapt ourselves to their desires, even if they

wish to learn English for different purposes, and in different ways, from those we may want.

In an age of strong national feelings, path (a) is perilous, as, if we attach to English language teaching strings which can be interpreted, however unjustly, as examples of 'linguistic imperialism', we risk the danger of its enemies forcing the abandonment of English language teaching lock, stock and barrel.

Path (b) will only mean that others will step in to take our place.

Path (c), on the other hand, can, I believe, be made to suit everybody. We have nothing to lose by encouraging and helping Asians to learn English in whatever way they want. But it means that those of us who are given the task of providing this encouragement and help have to make adjustments. In the first place, we need to make ourselves primarily linguistic specialists, not literary specialists who do some language teaching because it cannot be avoided. And, however 'literature-orientated' and 'realia-orientated' we may be, we have to abandon what may be cherished habits and preconceived notions, and strip our language-teaching to its bare scientific essentials before rebuilding it in ways that will be acceptable to a country that wants English primarily as a vehicle for international communication.

We can encourage ourselves with the realization that we will be able to help those students who have a thirst for knowledge about our way of life, or an interest in literature, to read our books and listen to our radio broadcasts to their hearts' contents after they have mastered English; whereas those who have neither will at least be in a position to use their knowledge of the language to further international understanding. And furthermore, if we remember that only a minority of native English speakers are really actively interested in their own literature, we shall not be disappointed if we find that the majority of Asian pupils find a compulsory dose of literature in their language learning hard to stomach.

The teaching of 'neutral' English to all except the few advanced students who wish to specialize in English literature will not destroy any literary values. After all, the fact that the vast majority of native English speakers speak a very pedestrian prose neither prevents poets writing fine poetry in English, nor makes it difficult for some native English speakers to appreciate this poetry. In fact, without a pedestrian, 'neutral' prose to serve as a contrast, poetry would be

flat and uninteresting. A student cannot appreciate the distinctive qualities of the poetical style of a foreign language unless he has a thorough grounding in the everyday language.

Gatenby ends his article by pointing out that 'any mutually intelligible form of educated English is universally acceptable', and that it is time Indian English was established as a Regional Standard. This may at first sight appear to be incompatible with his proposal about neutral English. But it is not in fact so. Neutral English is a negative concept, whereas the concept of Regional Standards is a positive one. The two complement each other. Neutral English means the avoidance of anything that will prevent the foreign listener understanding, whether it takes the form of a local peculiarity of pronunciation or a local idiomatic usage. A Regional Standard becomes acceptable for international communication when it becomes neutral English, i.e. when it divests itself of those particular local peculiarities that hamper international communication. I suggest that the English used by *any* speech community must be recognized as a Regional Standard of neutral English if it conforms to this requirement.

There is a severely practical side to the idea of Regional Standards. It is a truism that the average teacher can teach only the brand of English he himself speaks. Ducks cannot lay hens' eggs; and a teacher who speaks with—let us say—a marked Thai accent cannot be expected to turn out pupils who speak with an R.P. or a Mid-West American pronunciation, even if it were thought desirable that he should. To train all the teachers of English in a country to speak R.P. or some other dialect almost perfectly is obviously quite impractical. Even Western Europe, with its relatively good conditions of work and its long traditions of teacher-training, can produce only a small number of teachers of English with a near perfect pronunciation. In Asia, with its vast populations, very many teachers are poorly trained, over-worked and faced by huge classes (a class of 50 pupils is quite normal, and I have seen 80 first-year pupils of English in one class). Perfectionism is quite out of place here. If we try to teach all the small refinements of pronunciation, we shall end up by teaching nothing really thoroughly. It is only by having limited objectives that we can hope to achieve success. We must find out the particular points that interfere with international intelligibility in the speech-community in which we are working, and work

out intensive drills to overcome these obstacles one by one. Our efforts must be based on phonemics, not on phonetics.

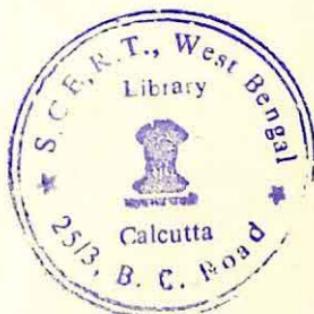
Perfectionists may say that this attitude is an encouragement of 'bad' English. But they must then tell us what 'good' English is, from the Asian student's point of view. R. A. Hall's 'Leave your Language Alone!' (*Linguistica*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1950) discusses this problem in a scientific spirit without regional prejudice. There are, as we all know, numerous varieties of English, divided historically, geographically and socially. Even if we eliminate older forms of English (e.g. Dickensian English) and dialects that are considered 'sub-standard' socially, we are left with standard Southern English, standard Northern English (spoken by educated people in the north of England), standard Scottish English, standard Welsh English and standard Northern Irish English, to mention only dialects in the United Kingdom. Then, America, Australia, South Africa, etc., have their own standard types of speech. Which of these, if any, is the 'good' English that the Asian student should choose, assuming for the moment that it is a practical proposition to teach him whichever variety he prefers?

Hall, in the article mentioned above, states that 'good' is a relative term in linguistics. 'Good' English is English that elicits the response desired by the speaker. A phonetician friend of mine, whose normal dialect is R.P., tells the following story about a period during the last war when he was working in a town in the north of England and cigarettes were in very short supply. If he went into a tobacconist's and said, 'Have you any cigarettes, please?' in his normal dialect, the answer was usually, 'Sorry, sir, we haven't.' If, however, he said, 'Go'ny fags, chum?' ([gɔ? ni fagz tʃum?]) with [a] instead of [æ], [u] instead of [ʌ], etc., he often got some. 'Good' English for the cigarette-seeker at that particular place and time happened to be the local brand of English.

What type of English, then, is 'good' for the Asian student? It depends, as in the case of my phonetician friend, what he wants his English for. If he wants it as a means of international communication with British people, Americans, Saudi Arabians, Japanese, etc., and is quite willing that people of other nations should recognize him for what he is, his own national brand of neutral English, i.e. his own Regional Standard, will serve him best.

To summarize, I believe very strongly in teaching plenty of

literature, life and institutions to the many who want them; but I also think that we should lend a sympathetic ear to the desires and aspirations of the many others who see in English the answer to their need for an international *lingua franca*, provided it is taught in a truly international way and not tied to any particular regional literature, institutions or way of life. If we can help tens of millions to learn English in this way, we can be confident that many of the more intelligent and sensitive will in due course use their knowledge of English to learn more about the nations that use it as their mother tongue. If, however, we demand, in return for our help, that all these tens of millions should take their English with a strong dose of British, or American, or Australian culture, I am afraid that we may kill, or at least seriously maim, the goose that lays the golden eggs.



## Is a Syllabus Enough?

It is fashionable nowadays to attack the old ways of teaching English and to campaign for their replacement by structural syllabuses. The argument goes as follows: 'The old Grammar and Translation method, and even the newer Direct Method, failed, therefore they must be wrong. The Structural Approach is based on a more scientific analysis of language, therefore it will succeed where the others have failed.'

Unfortunately, doubts are growing in some quarters about the accuracy of this prognostication, and there is a real danger that structural syllabuses and the Structural Approach may join the list of methods that have failed to stand the test of actual classroom use. Ultimately, the only criterion of success is whether a method can successfully be used by the average teacher teaching the average class. No other criteria matter. It is irrelevant to argue that this or that method must be better because it is more scientific, or more natural, or more direct, or anything else. The only questions that matter are: 'Does it provide what the average teacher needs?' And 'Does it succeed in producing pupils who are able to do what we want them to do?' If the answer to the first of these questions is 'No', the average teacher will start complaining about it to his headmaster, his inspector and anybody else who will listen, and in due course the resistance against the method will gather so much force that the method will be officially declared a failure and withdrawn. If, on the other hand, the average teacher finds that the method suits him, but examination results and the standard of students entering the universities show that the method is not producing results, there will again be opposition to it, although this time it will probably come from a different quarter. The Grammar and Translation method is an example of a method that many

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Teacher Education*, Delhi, Vol. II, No. 12, December 1958.

teachers of average ability like, because it is easy for them and requires very little actual command of the language, but which produces very poor results, as any university lecturer who has to cope with students trained by it will testify.

The question now arises, 'How can we satisfy the average teacher's needs and at the same time ensure that the pupils really learn what we want them to learn?' This is the crucial question, and to answer it, we first have to discover what the average teacher's needs are, and what we actually want the pupils to learn.

I recently heard a teacher of English in a rural school ask a pupil, 'What Jack eat for breakfast?' Realizing that something was wrong, the teacher then corrected himself: 'What Jack eats for breakfast?' At another school, I heard a teacher explaining the meaning of the word 'disservice' to a class which had already done four or five years of English: he said, 'My service is in this school. I am of service to this school. Now, if I leave the school, my disservice is in this school. I am of disservice to the school.' In another school, I saw the following written on a blackboard: 'ACTIVE. I have my breakfast at 7 o'clock. PASSIVE. My breakfast is had by me at 7 o'clock.'

What teachers who are capable of making such mistakes need more than anything else is a course in English. They need to learn a good command of correct English, and until they do this, they need a textbook which will guide them on their path so that they teach their pupils correct English and not a mass of errors which it will be difficult to eradicate later.

It is no use saying that such people should not teach English. The fact is that they do, and that their services are needed and could be very valuable if they were given the help they need. Nor is it any good saying that we must train them. There are tens of thousands of teachers of English in India alone, and they are of very varied ability. To train those who need training, we would require vast numbers of competent teacher-trainers, and the teachers themselves would have to be released from their teaching for long enough to profit from the training. The teacher-trainers simply do not exist in sufficient numbers, and English teaching in the schools would suffer chaos on an enormous scale if large numbers of teachers were withdrawn for a lengthy period of training.

Most teachers whose English is weak are very aware of this fact.

They are honest enough to realize that they cannot rely on their command of the language. That is why they resort so much to grammar and translation, and that is why they follow their textbook slavishly. The textbook, they reason, was presumably written by someone with a good command of English, so provided one sticks to what is in it, adding nothing and omitting nothing, one will be teaching good English.

What, then, does the teacher whose command of English is weak want? He wants a textbook which will both keep him within the bounds of good English and teach his pupils what they need to know. Ask a dozen teachers if this is, in fact, what they want, and see what they answer. I suggest that only such a textbook as this will answer the question 'Does it provide what the average teacher needs?' in the affirmative.

Now, the next question is, 'What do we want the pupils to learn?' The answer to this question will depend on our aims. Do we want the pupils to be able to speak some English? Or to understand spoken English? Or to read English? Or to write English? Or to translate English? Or do we want a mixture of these skills? The generally accepted view these days is that even if our objective is a reading ability, the best way to start on our path is by an oral approach, and most courses nowadays start by getting the pupils to listen to the teacher speaking, then go on to get the pupils to speak, then get them to read material which they have prepared for orally, then move on to practice in writing, and finally (and optionally) pass on to translation work.

Once we have decided what we want the pupils to learn, we go on to the question, 'How can we ensure that the pupils really learn what we want them to learn?' Here we have to decide what means we should follow to achieve each of the aims we have set ourselves. How, for instance, are we to train pupils to understand spoken English? How are we to train them to write English effectively? And so on. Here we should take questions of psychology into account. How does the human mind work in acquiring linguistic skills? What are the conditions in which it works best in acquiring these skills? What techniques can one use for presenting new material, what ones for fixing it in the pupils' minds once it has been presented? The answers to these and many other questions will help us to guide the teacher as to how to go about his task.

It is generally believed that it is better to teach one thing at a time than many things, and that it is better to introduce things in some sort of planned order than haphazardly. This means that we should collect together all the points we intend to teach and then arrange them in some order of teaching. The selection and grading of vocabulary used to be very popular, but now it is generally considered that the selection and grading of syntactical structures is more important. Pupils need to know the frames or patterns by which a language operates, rather than the vocabulary items it puts in these frames and patterns. Once the latter are mastered, it is easy to learn words to put in them, but without the patterns, words are of little use. Examples of patterns are . . . *is too* . . . *for* . . . *to do* and . . . *is* . . . *enough for* . . . *to do*, where *do* stands for any transitive verb in the so-called infinitive. We can put a very great variety of nouns, pronouns and adjectives in the blanks in this pattern without altering it as a pattern (e.g. *This tea is too hot for me to drink* and *That wall is low enough for John to jump*).

The realization of the importance of selecting and grading syntactical structures led to the Structural Approach. Like all movements in their early stages, the Structural Approach seemed to many people a panacea—they thought it was enough to draw up a list of syntactical structures, graded according to the principles of simplicity, teachability and so on, and then to put it into the teacher's and the textbook writer's hands with a guide book explaining how to use it. But unfortunately syntactical structures are not everything in English. There is also pronunciation, there is morphology, there is vocabulary and there are idioms. And there are very important questions of variations in meaning. *At the temple, in the temple* and *on the temple* are all examples of the same syntactical structure (Preposition + Definite Article + Noun), but it is not enough for the teacher to teach them all as if they were the same thing; we say *at church* and *at work*, but not *\*at temple* or *\*at labour*; the structure *was/were* plus the -ing form of the verb can refer to past time (e.g. *It was raining when I got home*), or to present time (*If my parents were living here now . . .*), or to future time (*We were leaving at ten o'clock tomorrow morning, but now our departure has been postponed*); and so on. It is no good just giving the teacher and the textbook writer a list of syntactical structures and some general guides and then hoping that he will manage all the rest. If he is one

of those rare teachers or textbook writers who combine a really good command of English with plenty of spare time and plenty of intelligence, he will manage. But such people do not need lists and guidance in the first place. They are quite capable of producing their own. As for the average teacher, whose command of English is more or less shaky, who has a heavy programme of work and who has to do extra jobs to earn a decent living, a list of syntactical structures and the general guides that go with it are inadequate. What he needs is a list of teaching points, including syntactical, morphological, idiomatic and vocabulary items, with advice on how to present, identify and drill each, and with reading pieces and composition exercises introduced at appropriate points. The drills would have to be given in the greatest detail, because rapid, effective drilling requires very careful preparation before class. It is no good trying to improvise drills on the spur of the moment unless one is a very experienced teacher who has a thorough knowledge of the course from which one is teaching.

The sort of textbook I envisage would be a very thick one, since it would contain everything the teacher needed, except models for pronunciation, which could be provided on gramophone records or on tapes. The textbook would have an index of words, showing where each meaning of each word was first introduced; and an index of structures, showing where each meaning of each structure was introduced.

If such a textbook were produced, it should be made quite clear that teachers would be absolutely free to follow it or not to follow it, as they wished. If a teacher felt he needed to follow the textbook exactly, he should be allowed to do so. Probably after a year or two he would gain enough confidence, experience and command of English from it to be able to dispense with it more and more. The really good teacher could ignore the textbook completely, or refer to it occasionally only, to borrow a drill or exercise or reading-piece that suited him, or to check whether he was leaving out any items which he would like to include. Teachers who were neither very good nor very weak could use the textbook when it suited them, and teach along their own lines at other times. I think it is quite wrong to force teachers to teach in one particular way; but I equally think it is quite wrong to refuse help to the teacher who asks for it, on the grounds that freedom is better than constraint, therefore all

teachers must be forced to be free, whether they like it or not. As a sheer matter of fact, too, I think that no skeleton syllabus and outline guide, and no textbook which is only a collection of reading pieces, each followed by questions and uncontextualized exercises, can give the weaker teacher all he needs.

Now, how would I go about preparing a textbook of the kind I suggest? I would first collect the teaching points (syntactical, morphological, etc.) that I wanted to include in my whole course (five-year, six-year, or whatever it was). I do not think it is a good idea to prepare such a collection piecemeal—that is, first build up a first-year collection, then comb what is left for the second year, and so on. I think the whole course should be an integrated one, so that we do not simplify our work in one year at the cost of creating unnecessary difficulties for ourselves in a later year. An example of what I mean is this: in the first year of one course, the following sentences are used for teaching the past (the future and the present having already been learnt): *This man will put on his hat* (this refers to a picture in the textbook which shows a man picking a hat up); *He is putting on his hat* (here a picture shows the man in the act of putting his hat on his head); *He put on his hat* (the picture shows the man with his hat on his head). The deliberate use of *put* instead of *has put* in the last of these three sentences is supposed to make things 'easier', because *has put* is considered more difficult than *put*. But if we look ahead to the time when *has put* will be taught, what do we find? We find that the pupils will have very great difficulty in getting the difference between *put* and *has put* straight, because they have learnt to use *put* in a situation in which *has put* is the obviously preferable form.

After collecting all the teaching-points I wanted to include in the course, I would arrange them in an order of presentation, following the well-known criteria of simplicity (simpler before more difficult), teachability (those which can serve as a basis for the teaching of other structures should precede the latter) and utility (more useful structures should precede less useful ones), and taking into account questions of learning psychology and classroom conditions.

I would then prepare the guide for teachers, which would include everything that could be of help to them, in the greatest detail. After having prepared this, I would experiment with it,

using the weakest teachers I could find, and trying to see whether my material could produce results under conditions of overcrowding, poor classrooms, etc. I would modify my material as I went along, on the basis of my own experience and that of other teachers trying it out. I would not consider anything worth offering to a Ministry of Education until it had passed the test of actual classroom use successfully. Finally, I would strongly recommend that inspectors and headmasters should be warned that no teacher should be forced to follow my material. If he could produce good results in his own way, he should be given every encouragement to do so. And I would suggest that other people should produce other textbooks, following different orders of presentation of material, so that teachers could have a choice.

That is what I would do if I were a syllabus-maker and course-writer. But of course my time would be wasted unless the official examinations were prepared in such a way that they really tested command of the things we wanted the pupils to learn. Any teacher who is ambitious will prepare his pupils for the examinations, regardless of what syllabus-makers and course-writers may say; and if the requirements of the examinations differ from those of the course-makers and syllabus-writers, the syllabus or course will, of course, be ignored.

To sum up, I believe that the Structural Approach has introduced something of very great value in the field of English teaching, but that it is in danger of being found wanting because the material so far prepared is not ample enough for the average teacher to be able to use the Approach successfully in the ordinary class.

I believe that arguments about orders of grading (e.g. whether questions and commands should be introduced early, or postponed until the statement structures have been well learnt) are of very minor importance. The order of presentation has no proved effect on the success or failure of the Structural Approach, unless this order is unsystematic and carelessly worked out. I believe that *no* order of presentation stands a good chance of being proved successful in the ordinary classroom unless the teacher is provided with the detailed material I have proposed; and that until such material has been produced, we shall be unable to collect reliable data on the relative effectiveness of different orders of presentation, because we shall be unable to see how they work under the only conditions

which are really relevant—those in the average classroom. The fact that a highly experienced teacher can give convincing demonstration lessons in which no questions or commands are used, or ones in which questions or commands are widely used, proves nothing, except that he is a highly experienced teacher.

## A Textbook for the English Teacher<sup>1</sup>

In Chapter 12 above, I suggested that it is not enough to give the average teacher a syllabus consisting of a list of syntactical structures accompanied by a slim teacher's guide. I believe that the teacher needs a book which will provide him with (a) suggestions for presenting each new teaching point in the syllabus in realistic situations; (b) detailed drills which he can use for fixing each new point in the pupils' minds also in realistic situations; (c) material for ear and speech training; (d) suggestions for teaching the early steps in reading and writing; (e) reading pieces based on the words and structures which have already been taught at each stage; and (f) writing exercises based on the same items. The pupils' book should contain (e) and (f) only.

### The teacher's difficulties

As will be seen from the above, the pupils' book would be an ordinary reader, following much the same lines as those at present in use, but much less steeply graded than most of the latter. But the teacher's book would contain much more. Authors of readers know quite well that their books provide only a quarter or a third of what the pupil needs in order to learn English properly: they often state in their introductions that the teacher must prepare each of the lessons in the reader orally before starting the pupils reading it. But this oral preparation is a big and difficult job for the average teacher who knows that his command of English is not very good and who has received no training in oral methods. Most teachers, in fact, do no oral preparation: their lessons consist of

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Teacher Education*, Vol. III, No. 7, July 1959.

reading aloud, followed by translation, followed by explanation of difficulties (in the pupils' mother tongue), followed by written exercises. This method of teaching does not provide the pupil with what he needs for mastering the language. Inevitably, therefore the mass of pupils leave school with a very inadequate command of English.

What I think is needed, therefore, is a book which will show the average teacher how to present and drill each new point orally before he goes on to the reading lesson based on it. Time and time again teachers ask me: 'How should I introduce the definite and the indefinite articles to my pupils?' 'How should I teach the conditionals?' 'What drills can I use for teaching the difference between the Present Perfect and the Past Simple?' 'How do you teach Reported Speech situationally?' 'Aren't drills dull and mechanical?' 'How can pupils understand the new point I am trying to teach them unless I translate it?'

### Through real-life situations

The general answer to all these questions is: The purpose of teaching a foreign language is to enable the pupils to use it. Using a language means knowing in what real-life situations each particular form is used. One can only learn to know this by hearing, speaking, reading and writing each form a sufficient number of times *in suitable, realistic situations*. Nothing can take the place of such repeated practice. Translation does not help, nor does grammatical explanation. Mechanical drills which are not related to real-life situations do not help either, besides being dull. But drill in interesting and realistic situations is essential. The big problem is to create suitable situations in which the form to be taught is used naturally and in such ways that the pupils grasp it.

Unless the teacher knows in what situations the definite article is used and in what situations the indefinite article is used, he cannot create suitable situations for presenting and drilling them usefully. But even if he is quite clear about the situations in which each of them is used, it still requires a lot of time and ingenuity to work out interesting lines of presentation and interesting drills.

## Preparation vs. improvisation

Only the highly-experienced, ingenious and quick-witted teacher with a very good command of the language can walk into a classroom unprepared and do successful oral work. Most other teachers become tongue-tied and stand racking their brains unsuccessfully for ideas while their class becomes restive and undisciplined; or they resort to dull, unimaginative drill work which is all they can think of on the spur of the moment. To be effective, oral work must be smooth and rapid, without long pauses and humming and hawing. All this points to the need for experts to produce material for oral work, and for them to do the work quietly and at their leisure. Only the exceptional actor can stand up on the stage and hold the audience spellbound by improvising: the average actor has to rely on the careful, thorough work of a playwright and a producer, and he has to spend many hours learning his part in order to give an illusion of naturalness and effortlessness. Similarly, the teacher who can stand up and do interesting, useful oral work without preparation is a rare person: the average teacher, like the average actor, does best when he is part of a team—in his case, the expert textbook writers being his partners.

As an example of the sort of material I think is needed, I give here an extract from an imaginary Teacher's Book, intended for the teacher using an imaginary structural syllabus.

### TEACHER'S BOOK

*For use with the X.....State Structural Syllabus*

**Step 205.** In step 98 we had the structure 'tell someone a story', and in Step 204 we have just had 'tell someone about something'. Revise these briefly before introducing Step 205, using the sort of situations given in Steps 98 and 204.

Then go on to Step 205 (the teaching point is the structure 'tell someone to do something').

#### A. Suggestions for presenting the teaching point

Say to one of the pupils, 'Go to that window, Ram (or whatever his

name is).' Then say to the class, 'I told Ram to go to that window.'

Then say to Ram, 'Go and sit down.' Say to the class, 'I told Ram to go and sit down.'

Then say to another pupil, 'Stand up, Sita (or whatever the pupil's name is):' Say to the class, 'I told Sita to stand up.'

Then say to Sita, 'Go to the door', and then to the class, 'I told Sita to go to the door.'

Then say to Sita, 'Open the door.' Say to the class, 'What did I tell Sita to do? I told her to open the door.' (Give the answer yourself after a brief pause, but if some of the brighter pupils answer, 'You told Sita to open the door', say, 'Very good!' and ask them to repeat the answer so that all the class can hear it.)

Then say to Sita, 'Shut the door.' Say to the class, 'What did I tell Sita to do? I told Sita to shut the door.' (Pause a little longer after the question this time, but give the answer yourself, either after those pupils that answer, or, if none of them answer, without waiting for more than a couple of seconds.)

Then say to Sita, 'Go and sit down.' Say to the class, 'What did I tell Sita to do?' (Pause as in previous paragraph.) 'I told Sita to go and sit down.'

Then say to the whole class, 'Stand up.' Then, 'What did I tell you to do?' They should answer, 'You told us to stand up.' If one or two bright pupils give the correct answer, ask them to repeat it so that the whole class can hear. If no one can answer, whisper the correct answer in the ear of one of the pupils and get him or her to say it aloud.

Do the same thing with, 'Sit down', 'Draw some trees', and 'Look at the blackboard'.

If you feel that it is necessary to continue the presentation, try using some of the following, addressing them either to one pupil or to the class as a whole:

'Clean the blackboard.'

'Open that window.'

'Shut that window.'

'Go out of the room.' 'Shut the door.' 'Knock at the door.' 'Come in.'

'Put that piece of chalk on that book.' 'Take it off again.'

'Draw a circle (on the blackboard).' 'Draw a square (on the blackboard).' 'Draw a face (on the blackboard).' 'Rub out its left ear.' 'Draw the left ear again.' 'Shut its eyes.' 'Open its eyes.'

N.B. Do not use *me*, *my*, *you* or *your* in your commands at this stage, since they often have to be changed in Reported Speech: e.g. 'Bring me your book'; 'You told Ram to bring you his book.' Such changes will be the teaching point in Step 208.

N.B. *This* and *these* often change in Reported Speech to *that* and *those*: e.g. 'Put this book on the floor'; 'You told Sita to put that book on the floor.' The changes follow exactly the same patterns as in Step 2.

## B. Suggestions for oral drills

(i) *Choral Drill.* Tell the class that you are going to give orders to individual pupils or to the class as a whole. They need not carry the orders out, but should pretend to do so (e.g. if you say, 'Ram Prakash, open the door!' Ram Prakash must stand up and pretend to open a door). Then you will ask the class what you said, and the whole class must report your order in chorus (e.g. you say, 'What did I tell Ram Prakash to do?' and the class must answer, 'You told him to open the door').

Here are some suggestions for orders to use in this drill:

Open	that	door.
Shut		window.

Go	to	the	door.
Point			blackboard.
Look	at		window.

Write	on the blackboard.
	a letter.

Read that	book.
	newspaper.
	letter.

Draw a	table.
	chair.
	book.
	face.

Clean the blackboard.

Drink a glass of water.

Eat a piece of bread.

Stand up.

Sit down.

Go to sleep.

Wake up.

(ii) *Individual Drill.* (If the pupils have trouble in thinking up orders

to give, you can put a list, such as the one given for (i) *Choral Drill*, above, on the blackboard.) Ask one of the pupils (e.g. Ram) to give an order to another pupil (e.g. he says, 'Gopal, clean the blackboard.') The pupil to whom the order is given should pretend to carry it out.

Then say to the pupil who gave the order, 'Ram, what did you tell Gopal to do?' (Answer: 'I told him to clean the blackboard.')

Then ask Gopal, 'What did Ram tell you to do?' (Answer: 'He told me to clean the blackboard.')

Then ask another pupil, 'What did Ram tell Gopal to do?' (Answer: 'He told him to clean the blackboard.')

Continue in the same way with other pupils.

(iii) *Drill in Groups*. Divide the class up into groups, each with a group leader, and get each group to practise giving and reporting orders while you go around checking. The pupils should take turns giving and reporting the orders. The group leader should point to the pupil who is to give the order, and then to the one to whom he is to give it. After the order has been given, the group leader should point to the pupil who is to ask for a report of the order, and then to the one he is to ask for the report. The leader should, of course, sometimes point to himself.

#### EXAMPLES

Ram (to Sita): 'Go to the window.'

Sita (to Ram): 'What did you tell me to do?'

Ram (to Sita): 'I told you to go to the window.'

Ram (to Sita): 'What did I tell you to do?'

Sita (to Ram): 'You told me to go to the window.'

Ram (to Gopal): 'What did I tell Sita to do?'

Gopal (to Ram): 'You told her to go to the window.'

Sita (to Gopal): 'What did Ram tell me to do?'

Gopal (to Sita): 'He told you to go to the window.'

Gopal (to Sita): 'What did Ram tell you to do?'

Sita (to Gopal): 'He told me to go to the window.'

Gopal (to Ram): 'What did you tell Sita to do?'

Ram (to Gopal): 'I told her to go to the window.'

Gopal (to Prakash): 'What did Ram tell Sita to do?'

Prakash (to Gopal): 'He told her to go to the window.'

N.B.—After each order has been given, only two or three of the above seven types of report should be asked for, otherwise the reporting becomes boring: the above examples are given to show the range of possible reports that can be asked for after one order has been given.

### C. Reading Work

After the structure 'tell someone to do something' has been mastered the pupils can be asked to read the following piece rapidly for comprehension, and to answer the questions at the end of it, to show that they have understood it.

#### MARY'S FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

Jack had a little sister. Her name was Mary. Mary's mother told her to eat her breakfast quickly and to put a blue dress on. She said, 'I am going to take you to Mrs Smith's school today. You are six years old now, and Mrs Smith is going to be your teacher. Her school is very nice, and your little friends, Joan and Betty, are there.'

Mary was happy. She ate her breakfast quickly and put her blue dress on. Then she and her mother went to Mrs Smith's school.

Mrs Smith told her to come in and sit down. She told her to sit with Joan. Then Mrs Smith told Joan to go to the blackboard and she told the other children to look at Joan. She told Joan to take a piece of pink chalk. Then she told her to draw a circle on the blackboard. Joan drew a circle. Mrs Smith said, 'That is a face.' The children laughed.

Then Mrs Smith told Joan to take a piece of blue chalk and draw two eyes. Joan drew two eyes, but they were very small. The children laughed again.

Mrs Smith said, 'Who can draw big eyes?' Mary said, 'I can.' The teacher told Mary to go to the blackboard and rub the small eyes out. Then she told her to draw two big eyes. Mary drew two big, beautiful eyes. 'That's very good,' said Mrs Smith. Then she told Joan to take the pink chalk again and draw a nose. Joan drew a good nose. Then the teacher told Mary to take a piece of red chalk and draw a mouth. Mary drew a nice, red mouth. The teacher

was pleased. 'That is a good face,' she said. Then she told Mary and Joan to sit down.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What was the name of Mary's brother?
2. How old was Mary?
3. What was the name of Mary's teacher?
4. Did Mary have any friends in Mrs Smith's school?
5. With whom did Mary sit?
6. What did Joan draw on the blackboard with a piece of pink chalk (two things)?
7. What did she draw with a piece of blue chalk?
8. Did Joan draw big eyes?
9. Who rubbed the small eyes out?
10. Who drew a mouth?

#### D. Writing work

Do *not* use conversion exercises of the type 'Convert the following from Direct to Reported Commands'. This type of exercise is quite artificial and divorced from real life: it is quite possible for a pupil to be able to use Reported Commands perfectly well in real life without being able to do such exercises correctly (many English children are in this position); and it is equally possible for a pupil to be able to do such exercises perfectly—by applying mechanical rules—without being able to use Reported Commands correctly in real life.

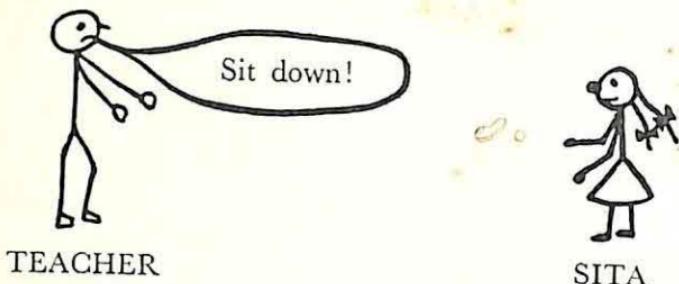
(i) *Substitution Table Work.* Begin by getting the pupils to write a little sequence describing their oral work on Reported Commands and using the following substitution table to help them (you can add to this table if you like, but do not put *my*, *your*, etc., in the part after *to*):

Our teacher I Ram Sita You We  (other names)	told	me you us Prakash (other names)	to	open	that	door.			
				shut		window.			
				go	to	door.			
				point		blackboard.			
				look at		window.			
				write		on the blackboard.			
				read that		a letter.			
				draw a	book.				
					newspaper.				
					letter.				
				clean the blackboard.					
				drink a glass of water.					
				eat a piece of bread.					
				stand up.					
				sit down.					
				go to sleep.					
				wake up.					

E.g. Our teacher told Ram to go to the blackboard and clean it. Then he told him to draw a table and a chair, etc.

(ii) *Picture Composition Work.* Draw pictures on the blackboard like the one on page 114 and get the pupils to describe them, e.g. 'The teacher is telling Sita to sit down.'

You can also draw a series of pictures, giving a sequence of actions and commands, by rubbing things out and putting new ones in. Each time you create a new situation in your pictures in this way, the pupils should write down what this situation is.



This is the end of the extract from the imaginary Teacher's Book. In the next Step (206), Reported Requests might be dealt with (e.g. 'Please come in' becoming 'I asked him to come in').

Then, in Step 207, Negative Reported Commands and Requests might be taken up (e.g. 'Don't come in' becoming 'I told him not to come in'; and 'Please don't come in' becoming 'I asked him not to come in').

The next Step (208) might go on to changes of person (e.g. I said to Ram, 'Open your book' becoming 'I told Ram to open his book', with 'your' becoming 'his').

## Structural Syllabuses and Contextual Syllabuses<sup>1</sup>

The structural syllabus is now familiar in many parts of the world. It is a graded series of teaching steps, each consisting of one sentence pattern (or grammatical structure), or of a vocabulary item (usually a 'structure word' such as *but* as against *and*). The steps are graded according to what the authors of the syllabus consider to be the relative ease, utility and teachability of the steps.

I have already given the opinion in several articles that such syllabuses are not sufficient for the ordinary teacher. He does not know what to do with them, so he falls back on his old practices of translation and grammatical explanation. If he has heard of 'drill methods', he makes his pupils repeat each of the sentences given in the syllabus one after the other: *Pupil 1*: This is a book. *Pupil 2*: This is a book. *Pupil 3*: This is a book, etc., until the last pupil has repeated this sentence. Then, *Pupil 1*: This is a pen, etc., etc.

This sort of thing can be avoided by having good textbooks based on the syllabus and—above all—good, detailed teachers' guides, which advise the teacher how to teach by the new methods. The syllabus need never be shown to the teacher then.

Here, however, I should like to make a plea for a radical revision of structural syllabuses along contextual lines. Structural syllabuses are based on the assumption that it is enough to grade the material from a *linguistic* point of view, i.e. to look at the grading from the point of view of the structures and words to be taught. A purely contextually graded syllabus would approach the problem from a radically different point of view, i.e. from the point of view of the situations which the pupils are to be taught to respond to. I suggest a compromise between the structural and the contextual syllabus.

<sup>1</sup> First published in *The Education and Psychology Review*, Baroda, Vol. I, No. 1, January 1961.

Language, after all, is communication. The reason why we learn a language is to be able to use it to communicate with others. (We should remember that communication is a two-way process. It has a creative side—speaking and writing; and a receptive side—listening and reading.) Obviously it saves a lot of time if, while we are teaching our pupils the mechanics of the language—the words and idioms and structures—we can simultaneously train them to communicate; i.e. to respond *to* language used in contexts which are natural or which resemble natural ones; and to respond *with* language used in such contexts.

There are various responses which we want our pupils to learn:

(a) We want them to be able to understand what they hear, and to show comprehension by taking suitable non-linguistic action (e.g. a lecturer asks a biology student to point out the spleen on a diagram, and the student does so);

(b) We want them to be able to respond to a stimulus orally by choosing suitable words, idioms and sentence patterns arranged in an acceptable order and pronounced intelligibly. The stimulus may be (i) a physical one (e.g. a lecturer points to a piece of apparatus, and the student says what it is and what it is used for); or (ii) a linguistic one (e.g. the lecturer asks the student for his opinion on a certain subject, and the student gives it; or the student sees a notice and reads it aloud);

(c) We want them to be able to understand what they read, and to show comprehension by taking suitable non-linguistic action (e.g. the student reads instructions how to perform a chemical experiment, and then performs the experiment);

(d) We want them to be able to respond to a stimulus in writing, by choosing suitable words, idioms and sentence patterns and arranging them in an acceptable order, with acceptable spelling, punctuation and legibility. The stimulus may be (i) a physical one (e.g. a student watches a lecturer perform an experiment, and makes notes of what the lecturer does); or (ii) a linguistic one (e.g. the lecturer lectures and the student takes notes; or the lecturer dictates and the student writes down everything he says; or the lecturer asks questions orally and the student writes the answers; or the student copies extracts from a book; or he gives written answers to written questions).

You can't teach pupils these skills just by piling up a mass of

vocabulary and idioms and structures in their brains, however neat the piling may be. It is like providing a boy with a carefully graded series of carpenter's tools (the structures) and a load of carefully selected wood (the vocabulary and idioms) and then thinking that you have trained him as a carpenter.

The structural approach has been of inestimable value in showing us the great importance of patterning in language learning. It freed us from the obsession with words by showing us that even more important than the words themselves are the ways in which they are arranged together into larger units. But I think the time has now come to modify the structural syllabus, keeping whatever is of permanent value in it, but putting the needs of communication in real-life situations or contexts first.

I think that, by focusing more sharply on our goal (i.e. on communication), we shall be able to cover more useful ground in the time at present available than is now possible. I also believe that in this way it will be possible to prepare teaching material which is more interesting for the pupils, which has a higher surrender value<sup>1</sup> at any given stage, and which gives the pupils a greater sense of learning things that are directly useful to them.

In the course itself, the emphasis on contextualization (i.e. on using language for meaningful communication) would lead to the avoidance of exercises consisting of strings of unrelated sentences, each torn out of its context—things like:

1. If I (have) a pen yesterday, I (write) a letter.
2. If the wind (be) less strong, the ship (not sink).
3. If Napoleon (win) the Battle of Waterloo, the history of Europe (be) very different, etc., etc.

Also such useless and unnatural exercises as conversion of isolated sentences from direct to indirect speech and from active to passive would disappear, leaving time for activities more directly aimed at training in real communication.

To prepare a really good structural/contextual syllabus, we should still need a first-rate analysis of the structure of English (a thing that does not yet exist, although Hornby's *A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English*<sup>2</sup> is very helpful); a list of idioms (or whatever

<sup>1</sup> 'Surrender value' is the usefulness of the knowledge a pupil has of the subject he is studying if he suddenly has to stop his studies before the full course is finished.

<sup>2</sup> London: Oxford University Press, 1954.

one likes to call them), particularly 'prepositional idioms' (a thing that also does not yet exist); and a list of vocabulary (West's *General Service List of English Words*<sup>1</sup> is useful here).

Out of this material, we would have to select those structural, idiomatic and lexical items that would enable our pupils to communicate in the contexts and at the levels we were aiming at (e.g. the pre-university course in India).

Then would come the task of selecting, and grading into steps, the contexts or situations we wanted our pupils to learn to respond to.

Finally, the structural, idiomatic and lexical items would have to be allotted to the contextual steps, and *not* vice versa, although some compromise would probably be necessary.

This procedure is based on the assumption, amply proved by experiment, that it is much easier to learn a word or structure if it grows naturally out of a context than if it is taught without such a context, or if the context is a forced, artificial, classroom one.

<sup>1</sup> London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., Revised and Enlarged Edition, 1953.

## The Teaching of the English Tenses<sup>1</sup>

Before we start to teach the English tenses, we must realize that every tense in English, except the *used to* tense (e.g. in *We used to live in Delhi*) and the *going to* tense (e.g. in *We are going to live in Delhi*), has more than one use. For example, the so-called 'simple present' tense can be used to show, (a) a habit (e.g. *I get up at 6 a.m.*); or (b) 'real present' time (e.g. in *I know the answer*); or (c) future time + someone's plan (e.g. in *We leave at 10 tomorrow*); or (d) future time without such plan (e.g. *do* in *You'll fall if you do that*).

We cannot expect our students to recognize uses (b), (c) and (d) of the 'simple present' tense just because we have taught them use (a). Each of these uses is a separate 'learning effort' for the students, so each must be treated as a separate teaching point.

To avoid confusing our students, we should be careful to distinguish very clearly between the various tenses and their various uses, and to teach each use of each tense in situations and contexts in which it is appropriate. The worst thing we can do (and unfortunately it is done in some books) is to teach a particular tense in situations in which a *different* tense ought in fact to be used. Some textbook writers are guilty of this serious fault. They excuse themselves by saying that they are making things 'easy' for the students. An example with *has put* and *put* is given on page 101.

Grammars are also sometimes guilty of misleading the teacher and the student. For example, in some, the statement appears that the 'present perfect' is used for recent past and the 'past perfect' for distant past. This is wrong: the 'present perfect' can be used for any past, recent or distant; and so can the 'past perfect'. Examples: *My grandfather has visited Rome* (he visited it 50 years ago), and *Now I am ringing the bell . . . and now I am opening the door*.

*When I opened the door, I had already rung the bell* (I did it five seconds ago).

We must also realize that some tenses overlap in their uses. For example, I can say, *I have lived in Delhi for two years*, or *I have been living in Delhi for two years* without any difference in the context.

Once we have made a list of English tenses, with the different uses of each and the areas of overlap clearly indicated, we can go on to the next step, which is grading these uses. The questions we have to ask ourselves are 'Which tense shall I teach first? Which second? Which third? Shall I teach the different uses of a particular tense one immediately after another, or should I scatter them over the syllabus? Should I teach all the tenses in the first year? Or in the first two years? Or what?'

To answer these questions, we have to examine the principles of grading: we grade teaching items according to their frequency, their usefulness, their difficulty and their value as preparations for the teaching of other things later. Obviously the different uses of different tenses vary greatly in frequency, usefulness and difficulty: the tense 'will have been doing' is clearly much rarer, less essential and more difficult than the tense 'is doing'. And the use of *will* to show strong probability in the present (e.g. in *This will be the house we're looking for: it has yellow shutters, as we were told*) is rarer, less useful and harder for the students to grasp than the use of *will* to show future time (e.g. in *He will be here at 7*).

This means that we should not teach all the uses of a particular tense—some of them rare and difficult, others common and easy—one immediately after the other. Nor should we try to cram all the tenses into one or two years. We should try to fit each use of each tense into a suitable point in the syllabus, leaving the rarer and harder ones till very late.

I myself begin by teaching *am/are/is* (e.g. *This is a book, I am a teacher, etc.*). Then, after other things have been taught, I go on to *am/are/is doing* (e.g. *I am putting my book into my bag*) for actions actually going on at the time of speaking. Next, after other teaching items, to *am/are/is going to do* (e.g. *I am going to put my book into my bag*) for actions in the future. Then to *have/has done* (e.g. *Now I have put my book into my bag*) for actions which are finished, but the results of which are still evident. All these can easily be demonstrated in the class in natural ways.

The next tense I teach is the 'did' tense (e.g. *I put my book into my bag yesterday*) for actions in the past, the results of which are no longer there. This takes us away from concrete realities for the first time. After that (but not immediately after), I teach the 'do/does' tense (e.g. *Rash puts his book into his bag every day*), for a habitual action. Here again, we are outside what can be demonstrated in the classroom.

I use the *going to* future because it avoids the *will/shall* problem in the early stages; because it is the most acceptably idiomatic way of expressing the future in contemporary English in most cases; and because it can be developed easily from what goes before: *am/are/is* —→ *am/are/is doing* —→ *am/are/is going to do*.

After having listed and then graded the uses of each tense, the next problem is how to teach them. As with every other teaching item, the first thing to do is to present the new use to the students orally, in such a way that they can understand it. 'Understanding' means 'recognizing under what circumstances the new item is used'. In the early stages, the presentation can be a concrete one. For the 'am/are/is doing' tense, the teacher begins, for instance, to walk and then says, *I am walking* while he is still doing so.

For the 'am/are/is going to do' tense, he begins by revising the 'am/are/is doing' tense (e.g. by drawing a square on the blackboard, and saying, *I am drawing a square* while he is actually doing it); then he goes on to the 'am/are/is going to do' tense; e.g. he makes circular movements near the blackboard without making any marks on it; then he says *I'm going to draw a circle*; then he draws the circle, saying, while he is drawing it, *Now I'm drawing the circle*.

For the 'have/has done' tense, he begins by revising the 'am/are/is going to do' and the 'am/are/is doing' tenses, and then goes on to the 'have/has done' tense. E.g. he says, *I'm going to draw a circle*; then, while he is drawing it, *Now I'm drawing the circle*; and finally, pointing to the finished drawing, *Now I have drawn the circle*.

The teacher should always be very careful to suit his actions to the tense he is using. For example, it is very misleading for the students if the teacher opens the door and says, *I am opening the door* when he has actually stopped doing so (in this case, of course, the correct tense is, *I have opened the door*).

The teacher should not think that one example is enough to impress the meaning of the new tense on his students. He should

give several: e.g. *I have drawn a circle*, *Ram has opened his bag*, *He has put his pen into his bag*, *You have stood up*, etc.

After presenting the new tense, the teacher should give the students oral practice in it, *in situations*. In a big class, choral practice or practice in groups is more economical than individual practice.

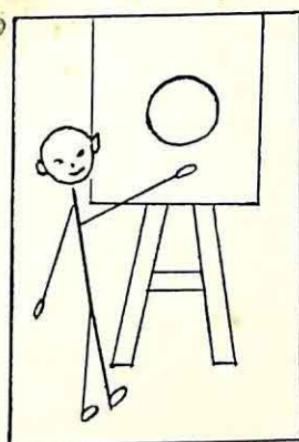
It is useless having merely mechanical drill; e.g. making the students repeat: *I have drawn a circle*, *I have drawn a circle*, *I have drawn a circle*, etc. Drill must be varied and meaningful to have any useful effect. E.g. the teacher opens the door and the students chorus, *You have opened the door*. He puts his hand on his desk and they say, *You have put your hand on your desk*, etc. The whole time, they are practising the same tense, but with variety and reality the whole time.

After this oral practice, the students can be given a piece to read, in which the tense they have been learning occurs a number of times. The piece can be followed by written questions to test the students' comprehension. E.g. the following sentences may occur in the piece: *Now the teacher is drawing a circle*. *He has drawn a square*. One of the questions at the end of the piece could ask the students to draw the teacher's pictures in the same order as he drew them (the instructions would be in the mother-tongue at this stage).

After this reading work, the students can be given writing practice on the new tense taught: for example, they can copy sentences from the following substitution table, choosing combinations that make good sense:

I	have	opened	a	door.
You		shut	the	window.
We		broken	my	pen(s).
They		found	your	pencil(s).
		brought	his	chair(s).
He	has		her	table.
She			our	
			their	

Or they can write suitable captions under pictures, e.g. this one, where the caption might be: *This man has drawn a circle on the black-board.*



Notice that the teacher *teaches* the new tense before he tests the students on it. Too many textbooks encourage the teacher to start at the third stage—the reading stage—and then go on to written exercises testing the students' knowledge of the new tense, without ever *teaching* it to them. This is, of course, absurd: you cannot expect students to know something that they have not been taught.

When we come on to tenses which cannot be demonstrated or practised in concrete situations, we can follow the same procedure as that outlined above, except that the situations the teacher creates will be verbal and not concrete, i.e. instead of *doing* things, he will talk. For example, if he wants to introduce the tense 'will have been doing' (we shall assume that 'will do', 'will have done' and 'have/has been doing' have already been taught), he can begin like this: *I came to Delhi in 1959. Now it is 1961. How long have I been living in Delhi? Yes, two years. I have been living in Delhi for two years. Next year will be 1962. Next year I will have been living in Delhi for three years, Yes, will have been living* (stressing *will*), *because 1962 is in the future. Now I have been living here for two years, but in 1962 I will have been living here for three years. And so on.*

Oral practice by the students follows the presentation, with the teacher stimulating the students' responses while himself saying as

little as possible. E.g. He says, *I have been here for three days. Tomorrow?* (The students chorus, *Tomorrow you will have been here for four days.*) *In six days' time?* (Students: *In six days' time you will have been here for nine days.*) Teacher holds up ten fingers. (Students: *In ten days' time you will have been here for thirteen days.*) And so on.

All this requires careful preparation, otherwise the teacher is likely either to dry up or to become inaccurate. This points to the need for suitable teachers' books, like A. S. Hornby's *The Teaching of Structural Words and Sentence Patterns*<sup>1</sup> to guide the teacher. A command of the tense system is so important if a student is to be able to use English effectively that the provision of such books is surely essential.

<sup>1</sup> London: Oxford University Press (Stage One, 1959; Stage Two, 1961; Stage Three, 1962).

## Examinations in English<sup>1</sup>

### Why have examinations?

One can look at examinations in two ways: as means of finding out what the students know (and don't know); or as carrots dangled before the noses of teachers and students to lead them along a particular path in their studies. Even if we disapprove of formal examinations as means of finding out what the students do and do not know (some people would prefer teachers' assessments instead), it seems to me that they are essential as means of getting the teachers to teach what we want the students to learn: the average teacher in most countries tries to get as many of his students as he possibly can through the examinations, since he is judged on the percentage of successes he achieves. If he can get the greatest number through an examination in English by making them learn model answers to expected examination questions by heart without understanding them, he is going to spend much more time on this than on teaching them English. But if he can only achieve success by really teaching his students English, he will do this.

If there is no examination there to act as a carrot, there is not much the authorities can do to ensure that the teacher gives the students what they want him to give them. The authorities may say, 'We want you to train the students in the skills required for actually *using* English in real-life situations. We want you to train them to understand a person speaking English to them; to answer him in intelligible English; to read an English book and understand it; and to write simple English reasonably correctly.' But many teachers instead of doing these things may do quite different ones; they may spend most of their time doing reading aloud, translation,

<sup>1</sup> First published in *New Education*, Madras, Vol. XII, No. 1, September 1960.

grammatical analysis and unprepared free composition with their students—four things which contribute little or nothing to the achievement of the authorities' objectives. If the teachers' assessments are taken as the basis for promotion, university entry, etc., such teachers will of course assess the students, not according to their ability to do the things the authorities want, but according to their ability to read aloud, translate, do grammatical analysis and write free compositions which they have crammed up beforehand. As a result, university professors and lecturers will find that many of the students who come up to them from the schools are unable to understand their lectures, unable to understand the books they have to read, unable to write two sentences correctly, and unable to talk in a tutorial or seminar. It is as if we told a teacher to teach his pupils biology, and instead he taught them physics, assessed them on their knowledge of physics, and finally certified that they knew biology!

I therefore think that formal examinations in English will have to stay for a considerable time in schools—at least until efficient methods of teaching this subject have become second nature to the teachers; and until the teacher has enough social prestige to resist the threats and enticements of parents in important positions.

If formal examinations are to stay, what form should they take now that new methods—structural syllabuses, the Situational Approach, the Oral Approach, etc.—are coming in? That is what I am going to discuss in the main part of this chapter.

### Periodical tests and internal examinations

Before I go on to such examinations, however, I shall deal briefly with the question of periodical tests and internal examinations. A good English course will incorporate continuous assessment of the students' progress as part of the teaching process: every time you get students to do an oral drill, you are not only helping them to consolidate their grasp of something you have already presented to them orally, but you are also finding out whether they have grasped it properly: if they are unable to do the drill, it shows that your presentation has not been successful, and that you will have to try again, perhaps from a different angle. Similarly, every time you

give them a comprehension piece to do (a piece which they have to read rapidly and then answer questions about), you are in fact not only giving them practice in rapid reading for comprehension, but also finding out whether they have understood the work that they have already done orally. Writing exercises, too, not only give the students practice in this skill, but also test whether the students are keeping up with what the teacher is teaching them.

The purpose of such continuous testing (always combined with actual teaching—or rather learning) is to test the *teacher* rather than the students: the teacher wants to know whether he has succeeded in establishing a link in the students' minds between a particular word (or grammatical structure) and a particular real-life situation in which this word (or structure) is natural.

If this testing-plus-teaching goes on continuously, and if the course used provides for continuous revision, there is not much need for formal periodical tests or internal examinations set and marked by the teacher himself: if you are continuously testing informally as you go along, it is a waste of time and energy to do yet more testing merely for form's sake. However, if it is really felt necessary to have such periodical tests and formal internal examinations, what follows applies to them as much as to formal external examinations.

### External examinations: validity

External examinations are partly carrots to lead teachers and students along the paths the authorities wish them to follow; partly tests of the teachers' efficiency; partly devices for measuring differences between the abilities of different students; and partly devices to enable us to declare that certain students have reached the minimum standard for some particular thing (such as university entry) and that others have not.

Obviously examinations will act as carrots only if, to get as many students through them as possible, the teacher really has to teach them what the authorities want them to learn. If he can get more students through by teaching them other things, the examinations will serve as carrots in the wrong direction. It is therefore very important that the types of test used in the examinations should really test what the authorities want to find out; i.e. that they should

be *valid*. Our aims must be quite clear; and our tests must fit in closely with these aims, so that only those who achieve the aims pass, and only those who do not achieve them fail. If our aim is X but the examinations test Y, success in the examination will depend on Y, not on X, so that candidates will pass or fail in accordance with a factor (Y) that is irrelevant to our aim.

This, of course, also affects the effectiveness of an examination as a test of the teachers' efficiency. If an examination tests Y but not X, it does not show us whether Mr A is an efficient teacher of X, but only whether he is an efficient teacher of Y.

Similarly, such an examination will not tell us whether candidate B is better at X than candidate C; nor whether candidate D has reached the standard required in X for university entry (or whatever it may be). We will know the relative strength of B and C, and the acceptability or not of D, only in terms of Y.

If the professors and lecturers of a university want a certain minimum standard in X from those who come to them, but in fact they get students with a certain minimum standard in Y, there is bound to be trouble.

If in place of X we put 'ability to express ideas clearly and reasonably correctly in simple written English'; and in place of Y, 'ability to cram up answers to a number of expected examination questions, without understanding these answers', readers will no doubt recognize the situation all too well.

We must therefore first set our aims clearly and unambiguously; then we must work out valid ways of testing whether these aims have been achieved; and then we must give teachers several years' notice of the forms the tests are going to take, so that they can have a fair chance to prepare their students in the new ways necessitated by the new types of test.

## Aims

Our aims might be four at the school-leaving level: (i) ability to understand simple English spoken by educated people from various parts of one's own country, by speakers of 'standard' English (so-called Received Pronunciation, R.P.) from Britain, by Americans who have not got a marked regional accent, and by other foreigners

who speak with a pronunciation reasonably close to R.P.; (ii) ability to make oneself understood when speaking to the types of people mentioned in (i) above; (iii) ability to understand a non-technical book written in ordinary contemporary English, with the occasional use of a dictionary; and (iv) ability to express ideas clearly and reasonably correctly in simple written English.

I deliberately omit translation, since I think that this is a quite separate (fifth) skill, which contributes little or nothing to the other four. I believe in training translators, but only at the post-graduate level.

I also omit ability to analyse and talk about the grammar of English. This is not an ability which contributes to a mastery of the four skills enumerated in my previous paragraph but one; nor is it an ability which is of much practical value to anybody. It could well form part of the B.A. Honours course at the University.

### Levels

The next step after setting our aims (I am not suggesting that the four I list above *must* be accepted; it is for educational authorities to decide) is to decide on our levels; what vocabulary, what structures and what idioms will a student be expected to have a mastery of for the examination in question?

Next we must work out tests which will show to what extent teachers and students have succeeded in attaining the aims set and the levels selected.

### Entrance tests and grading tests

In an examination which seeks to determine whether a candidate has or has not reached a predetermined level, all the questions can be of about equal difficulty, the level being approximately that of the borderline between a pass and a failure. But in an examination which tries to measure differences between the abilities of different students, one should have a wide range of levels of questions, so that only very exceptionally brilliant students can answer all the questions, and only very exceptionally dull ones can answer none. There should

also be a series of questions, graded according to difficulty, between these two limits, so that it is possible to distinguish the rather good from the good, the good from the very good, etc. If all the questions are difficult, there will be no way of distinguishing between fair, weak and very weak students (because they will all get very low marks); and if all the questions are easy, there will be no way of distinguishing between very good, good and fair students, since all will get very high marks. It is best to have a series of questions beginning with very easy ones, which even the weakest can answer, and progressing gradually to very hard ones, which only the exceptional student can answer. One will then get a good scatter in the marking.

One should always remember that, as long as human-beings remain what they are, there will *always* be marked differences of ability in any class: a few will be above average, a few will be below average, and the majority will be average. That is perfectly natural, and an examination that merely sets out to show that such differences exist is a waste of time; one doesn't need an examination to tell one such an obvious fact.

### Sampling

Another important fact to remember is that it is impossible for an examination which lasts only a few hours to test *everything* the students have been taught. Although, in Imperial China, there was an examination for which the candidates were shut up in little rooms for several weeks and told to write down everything they knew, we do have not time to do such things these days. An examination must therefore test a fair and adequate *sample* of what the students are expected to know. One of the arts of preparing good examinations lies in the ability to sample fairly and adequately. Let us suppose for instance, that a student is expected to know the 2,500 or so words of the *General Service List of English Words*,<sup>1</sup> and we can only test him on—say—50 of these; we must choose these 50 in such a way that we can fairly and reasonably assume that, if he gets 25 right, he probably knows 1,250 words of the 2,500 word list, etc. An examination which does not sample fairly is not a fair examination, since luck will play too great a part in it. For instance, if the teachers

<sup>1</sup> See footnote, page 118.

and students are not told beforehand what vocabulary the latter will be expected to know, and then five rare words taken at random from the half million in English are made the basis of the test, it will largely be a question of luck whether an individual candidate happens to know those particular words or not. It would be possible for candidate A to know far more words than candidate B, and yet for A to fail while B passes because the former did not happen to know the 5 words chosen, while B did.

### Testing the achievement of the four aims

(i) *Understanding.* To test whether candidates can understand English when they hear it spoken, we have to give them a test in which they have to listen to English being spoken, and then show that they have understood what was said.

If we want to know whether they can understand people other than their teacher, we have to arrange for another person (or other persons) to do the speaking. We can, for instance, have a tape-recording, and play it to all the candidates, wherever they may be.

A continuous piece is, I think, better than a series of isolated sentences, torn from their contexts. After reading the piece aloud to the candidates (once or twice), we can get them to answer written questions which test their comprehension of the piece. These questions can be essay-type (where the candidates have to supply the answers themselves, in writing); or objective-type (where alternative answers are given, and the candidates have to choose the correct one in each case, and put a mark against it).

The piece should, of course, contain only words and structures which the students are expected to know.

(ii) *Speaking.* To test the candidates' ability to speak intelligibly, we have to have an oral test of at least five minutes for each of them separately. In this test, the examiner tries to get the candidate to answer questions, to ask questions and to talk about certain things. For instance, he can say, 'Imagine that I am a stranger, and tell me how to get from your school to the railway station on foot.'

(iii) *Reading.* To test the candidates' ability to read rapidly with comprehension, we should give them a piece of English which they have never seen before to read, within a limited period of time,

and then give them a test to see whether they have understood it. The piece should, of course, only contain words and structures which they are supposed to know.

To test comprehension, we should give the candidates written questions to answer (in writing too). These questions can either be of the essay-type (in which case the test is partly one of composition), or of the objective-type (in which case the test is purely one of comprehension).

(iv) *Writing*. Here we can test two things: (a) ability to use certain words and structures accurately; (b) ability to arrange and present thoughts in good English.

For (a) we can use vocabulary and structure tests, in which the candidates have to fill in blanks, convert sentences from one type to another, etc. It is important here to make sure that all the questions are contextualized, either by using pictures, or by having continuous pieces, and not just isolated sentences torn from their contexts. Any sort of mechanical conversion exercises (e.g. 'change the following form from active to passive', or 'change the following sentences into indirect speech') should be viewed with suspicion: what we want to know is whether our candidates can *use* English for practical purposes, i.e. in realistic situations, not whether they can perform tricks.

For (b), we have to set a composition; but it is very important that it should be a type of composition that students cannot cram up beforehand. I like picture compositions and skeleton compositions. The former consist of 6 or 8 pictures which tell a story, like a strip cartoon. The candidates have to relate the story told by the pictures, and to give it a title. They can also relate the incidents which they think may have led up to the position in the first picture; and the events that may have followed the last picture. The examiner sets certain limits (e.g. 250 to 350 words) for the composition.

As for skeleton compositions, in these the examiner gives a rather detailed outline of what he wants the candidates to write, and they have to follow this outline. For example, he writes: 'Husband—wife—boat—fishing—wife drops bracelet—falls in sea—cries—etc.

Both in picture compositions and in skeleton compositions, the examiner should see that no words or structures are required which

are outside the range expected from the candidates. For example, if they have not done the word 'giraffe', there should not be a picture of such an animal in the picture composition (or else, if the examiner feels he must have one, he should write the word *giraffe* underneath it).

In all the above types of test, the examiner should be careful to keep the needs of validity and sampling in mind.

## Some Uses of the Tape-Recorder in and outside the English Classroom<sup>1</sup>

A tape-recorder can be used very effectively both for ear-training and for speech-training work.

I distinguish between two types of ear-training:

Type (a), the purpose of which is to train students to hear phonemic distinctions (i.e. to hear differences which are important for understanding English—differences in sounds, like /i:/ in *seat* and /ɪ/ in *sit*; or differences in stress patterns, like a *singing bird* and a *singing bird*; or differences in intonation patterns, like *It's raining?* and *It's raining*).

Type (b), the purpose of which is to drill words, sentences, poems or pieces of prose into the student's memory, so that he can later repeat them with a good pronunciation, or so that they can later serve as models for other utterances. Anyone who has used a tape-recorder to help him learn a poem prescribed for an examination, or a part he has to act in a play, will know how very effective this method is: hearing the same thing over and over again at intervals, always pronounced in exactly the same way, makes a very powerful impression on the listener's auditory memory.

I shall not deal further with Type (b), above, since the technique is rather obvious: the tape is made by the best speaker of English available, and the students listen to it, in or out of class, all together, or in groups, or singly.

The fundamental technique with Type (a), above, is to make a tape which first drills the desired contrasts between sounds, stress-patterns and intonation-patterns, and then provides tests of the students' ability to hear these contrasts. A large stock of materials for the presentation and testing of sound contrasts will be found

<sup>1</sup> First published in *English Language Teaching*, Vol. XV, No. 3, April-June 1961.

in my book and tapes, *Drills and Tests in English Sounds*.<sup>1</sup> For the most economical use of time, one should select only those contrasts that are difficult for one's own students: with French students for example, the contrast between /i:/ and /ɪ/ mentioned above would almost certainly be worth including, but it would be unnecessary for Hindi-speaking students, since they have this contrast in their own language. On the other hand, both French and Hindi-speaking students would need work on the contrast between /θ/ in *think* and /s/ in *sink*.

The way in which I use a tape for this work is as follows: I begin by recording the sounds I want to deal with in common key-words, followed by the same sounds in isolation (e.g. for /ɔ/ and /ɔ:/, I would say: *not*—/ɔ/—*four*—/ɔ:/).

Then I go on to give minimal pairs of words (pairs which differ only in the sounds being drilled), e.g.

1	2
<i>cot</i>	<i>caught</i>
<i>don</i>	<i>dawn</i>
<i>cock</i>	<i>cork</i>
etc.	

Before the lesson, I write these words on the blackboard in columns, one headed 1, and the other 2.

I then go on to ear-training tests, having instructed the students what to do: they have to listen to each word said on the tape-recorder and decide whether it contains the vowel illustrated in Column 1, or that illustrated in Column 2.

This section gives a series of words containing the Column 1 sound and the Column 2 sound mixed up, e.g.

*cord*  
*morse*  
*pot*  
*court*  
*cod*

These words are chosen in such a way that in each case, the other alternative is a real word (e.g. both *cord* and *cod*, *morse* and *moss* do exist in English).

If a student thinks a word contains /ɔ/, he has to write 1 (for Column 1) opposite it. If he thinks it contains /ɔ:/, he has to write 2. The correct answers to the sample test given above are, of course, 2, 2, 1, 2, 1.

The next section of the tape gives sentences containing a minimal contrast, e.g.

*Is the cod ready for me yet?*

*Is the cord ready for me yet?*

*Is the cord ready for me yet?*

These sentences are spoken at normal conversational speed, with exactly the same stress and intonation patterns in all three, and with the word containing the minimal contrast (*cod/cord*) left without the main stress in each case.

Here again, the students have to put 1 or 2 opposite each sentence, the correct answers here being 1, 2, 2.

The last section of the tape gives meaningless words, e.g.

/pɔ:s/

/vɔn/

/jɔk/

/mɔ:t/

/tɔ:z/

These 'words' are chosen in such a way that in each case the other member of the pair does not exist either (e.g. neither /pɔ:s/ nor /pɔs/, /vɔn/ nor /vɔ:n/ are real English words). Again the students have to mark 1 or 2.

These drills and exercises sharpen the students' awareness of the important contrast between /ɔ/ and /ɔ:/ which exists in English—a contrast which is far more one of quality than one of length in present-day English.

As in the case of ear-training work, I distinguish between two types of speech-training work:

Type (a), the purpose of which is to eradicate faulty sounds, stress-patterns and intonation-patterns and to replace them by correct speech-habits.

Type (b), the purpose of which is to improve students' elocution by getting them to imitate good models of speech.

For this latter activity, one can use the same sort of material as for ear-training Type (b), i.e. words, sentences, poems or pieces of

prose; but one must allow time for repetition by the students by having pauses at suitable points. The best type of tape-recorder to use for this work is a double-channel model such as a Ferrotutor. With this, the teacher prepares a tape on another machine, recording his voice on one channel (the upper half of the tape), and the student plays this back listening to the teacher's voice and recording his own imitation of it on the other channel (the lower half of the tape). He can then play the tape back again, with both channels audible, so that he can hear the teacher's reading and his own imitation of it, one immediately after the other. When he has finished he can use the lower half of the tape again for a further attempt without erasing the upper half at all. In this way, one tape made by the teacher can be used again and again by one student or by many students one after the other.

Going back to speech-training of Type (a), I shall deal with the techniques I use for this in greater detail. They are based on (i) the fact that it is impossible for a person to hear his own voice as others hear it while he is speaking, because of the echo of his voice within the bone-structure of his head; (ii) the fact that it is much easier to correct a mistake in one's pronunciation once one has been made aware of it and noticed it; and (iii) the fact that it is difficult to believe that one is really capable of making a 'difficult' sound until one has heard oneself making it.

I begin my speech-training by writing the same sort of columns (1 and 2) on the board as for ear-training, Type (a).

I then switch the tape-recorder on and ask a student to read the word-pairs in the columns into the microphone: e.g. *cot-caught*; *don-dawn*; *cock-cork*; etc. If he mispronounces one of the vowels, I wait until he has finished the whole series of word-pairs, and then help him, gently and without ridicule, to correct his pronunciation, by getting him to round his lips more, or to try to approach more closely to Hindi /u/, or whatever it may be. It is *very important*, while doing this, to be patient and friendly, and to make it quite clear by your whole attitude that you are not laughing at or censuring the student for faults which are, after all, beyond his easy control, but that he and you are engaged in a friendly piece of collaboration to try to achieve something worth while.

Throughout this corrective work, the tape-recorder is left running. When the student has made the correct sound several times (or, in

desperate cases, when the teacher thinks it would be better to postpone the continuation of the attempt to a later session), the piece is played back to the student and class, with the teacher ~~commenting~~ pointing; e.g. 'Now listen for the mistake in this word (pointing to the blackboard). There, did you hear it?—Now, that's a much better /ɔ:/—Yes, that one was perfect.'

In this way, the student (a) becomes conscious of his mistakes and (b) actually hears himself improving and finally (in most cases, I find) actually making the correct sounds several times.

I must emphasize, here, that the teacher must know *how to* improve students' pronunciation, otherwise the technique described above is a boomerang, destroying the students' confidence in their teacher. Secondly, this technique will not ensure that a student will no longer make mistakes in the sounds practised: there are three stages in changing from one pronunciation to another: (i) learning to recognize the new sound contrast when one hears it; (ii) learning to make this sound contrast consciously, under the teacher's guidance; and (iii) practising and overpractising this contrast until it becomes part of one's unconscious stock of habits.

Ear-training Type (a) covers (i); speech-training Type (a) covers (ii); but (iii) can be done only by the student in his spare time. Here, again, a Ferrotutor is very useful, and my technique for employing it for such spare-time practice is the same as for speech-training Type (b), which is described above.

The techniques I have described above for speech-training can be used for teaching stress-patterns and intonation-patterns. Here I have found the Ferrotutor of the greatest value.



## Colour Slides in Language Teaching<sup>1</sup>

If you or one of your friends has a good 35-millimetre camera, you can make yourself a very effective visual aid without having to spend very much money. Instead of trying to make a film strip, which is quite expensive, you can simply take a series of colour pictures and then have the resulting transparencies mounted in cardboard or metal mounts for showing in class. You will need a film-strip projector with an attachment for showing such mounted transparencies, and it is also useful to have a rear-projection screen, which enables you to show the transparencies without having to darken the room. A further advantage of this type of screen is that the projector and screen are close together, so that you can operate the former and point to the latter quite easily at the same time.

Great advantages of transparencies over film strips (apart from their cost) are that you can show them in any order you like; you can leave one or two out without the children knowing that they are missing something; you can take further photographs at any time to supplement those you already have; and you can easily replace any picture that proves, under classroom conditions, to be confusing or dull.

I find that colour is a great help in seizing and holding the interest of a class. It is also much better than black and white for linguistic purposes: colours provide distinct contrasts, and give the teacher and the pupils more to talk and ask questions about ('Look at that boy in a yellow shirt. What's he doing? He's throwing a ball to the boy in a pale blue shirt', etc.).

The most interesting series of transparencies is one that tells a story. Three experimental series of this kind were prepared last year by the Department of Extension Service, Central Institute of

<sup>1</sup> First published in *English Language Teaching*, Vol. XV, No. 4, July-September 1961.

Education, Delhi, at my suggestion and under my general direction. The first told the story of a girl who suddenly got a violent toothache during a family meal. The series shows her mother looking into her mouth and then telephoning the dentist for an appointment, the dentist answering, the mother and daughter setting off for the dentist's, getting there, sitting in the waiting-room and then going into the dentist's surgery. There are shots of the dentist treating the tooth, then the girl says goodbye to him with a radiant smile (to encourage other children to visit the dentist!), and the final picture shows the girl having a meal without any pain.

If one chooses one's scenes carefully, it is possible to produce a series of transparencies which can be used with classes of different levels by varying the difficulty of the vocabulary and structures one uses. For instance, with a lower class one can say, 'The girl's tooth is hurting very much', while in a higher class it might be, 'The girl has violent toothache.' And 'They are leaving their house. They will go to the dentist's house' can become, 'They are leaving their house for the dentist's.'

Series of colour transparencies can be used for aural comprehension work, oral composition work and written composition work. A lesson or series of lessons based on such pictures could go as follows:

(i) The teacher shows the pictures one after the other, telling the story, with close reference to the pictures, as he goes along, and using vocabulary and structures which are either known to the students or clear from the context supplied by the pictures. In the case of new words and structures, he ensures that they recur often enough in what he says to give the students a chance to absorb them. If he wishes, he can write the new words and structures up on the blackboard at this stage. If he does not want to interrupt the story to do this, he should write them up after finishing.

(ii) The teacher shows the pictures again, asking questions which stimulate the class to build up the story orally. He can ask either for general responses from all pupils in the class who have something to say, or for individual responses from named pupils. I prefer the former technique, as it keeps the whole class keen. There is nothing more frustrating for children who are deeply interested and eager to talk than to have to keep silent while one of their number monopolizes the class time.

(iii) The teacher shows the pictures again, while the pupils tell the

story without questions from the teacher. If necessary, they can be heard having key-words and structures written on the blackboard. The aim at this stage is rapid, fluent talking, not slow, laborious searching for words and structures which have been imperfectly mastered.

(iv) The pupils are asked to write the story told by the pictures as homework or in class. If the teacher thinks it advisable, he can prepare the pupils for this work by getting them to go through the story orally once more in class, while one of the pupils writes it on the blackboard. During this activity, the pupils should not be allowed to write anything down themselves. The advantage of this work is that it diminishes the mistakes that the pupils make in their own writing of the story: it is perfectly obvious that every time a student writes a mistake, he is fixing it more firmly in his unconscious, so the more we can do to give our pupils practice in writing correct English instead of wrong English, the more they will benefit.

Another way in which colour transparencies can be used is to provide material for more formal tests of the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Here are examples:

(i) Listening. *Aim of test*: To discover whether the pupil can hear important differences between English sounds. *Method*: The pupil is given a sheet of paper on which to mark his answers to the test. The examiner then reads out a number of statements, and the pupil has to mark on his paper the ones that are true of the pictures he is shown. *Example*: Picture 1 shows a sheep standing on a cliff looking out to sea. There is a ship on the sea. The examiner says: '1. There is a ship on the sea (or) There is a ship on the land (or) There is a sheep on the sea (or) There is a sheep on the land.' If he says the first or the last of these four sentences, the pupil should put a mark opposite 'Question 1' on his sheet of paper. If the examiner says the second or third sentence, he should not put anything against Question 1. The examiner then goes on to Question 2, which may, for example, deal with the difference between the *s* sound in *seat* and the *sh* sound in *sheet*; and so on.

(ii) Reading. *Aim of test*: To discover whether the pupil can read rapidly and with comprehension within the limits of vocabulary and structures he is supposed to have reached. *Method*: Similar to that for (i). Listening, above, except that the questions are written

instead of oral. The pupil is given a limited time to answer the questions. *Example*: Picture 1 shows a dog sitting at a street-corner and looking at a passing carriage. Question 1 is: 'There are three people in this (car, carriage, cart, van, wagon). The dog at the street- (angle, corner, curve, hook, point) is looking (at, in, on, to) them.' The pupil has to cross out the wrong words in the brackets. (Note that the words are given in alphabetical order in each case, to discourage guessing.)

(iii) Speaking. *Aim of test*: To discover whether the pupil is capable of making the essential distinctions between English sounds when speaking. *Method*: The pupil is shown pictures, and has to say what they represent, or to answer questions (oral or written) about them. The pictures and questions are selected in such a way that the pupil has to use certain words which contain the sounds to be tested. If a tape-recorder is available, it is desirable to have the pupil's responses taped so that they can be carefully evaluated. *Example*: The pupil is instructed to say what he sees in each picture. Picture 1 shows a sheep, Picture 2 two men, Picture 3 one man, etc. The examiner listens for the *sh* and the *ee* sound in *sheep*, the *e* in *men*, the *a* in *man*, etc.

(iv) Writing. *Aim of test*: To discover whether the pupil can describe what he sees in legible handwriting, with correct spelling and punctuation, selecting suitable words and structures from within the limits of what he has been taught. *Method*: The pupil is shown pictures and is instructed either to describe them or to answer certain questions about them, or to deal with them in certain other ways (e.g. to ask questions about them himself). *Example*: Picture 1 shows a man sitting at a table in a restaurant and speaking to a waiter. The pupil is told that the man wants a glass of water. Question 1 is: 'Report what the man is saying to the waiter. Use Reported Speech.'

The enterprising teacher will, no doubt, find other ways of using colour transparencies. They can, for example, provide background material for the study of the geography, history and culture of the country whose language one is studying.

The following books by L. A. Hill have been published by the Oxford University Press.

*Aural Comprehension and Pronunciation:*

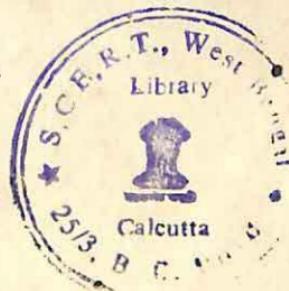
Elementary Stories for Reproduction  
Intermediate Stories for Reproduction  
Advanced Stories for Reproduction  
English Sounds and Spellings (with J. M. Ure)  
English Sounds and Spellings—Tests (with J. M. Ure)  
English Sounds and Spellings—Dictation Pieces  
Stress and Intonation Step by Step (Workbook, Companion and Gramophone Records)

*Reading:*

Elementary Comprehension Pieces  
Advanced Comprehension and Appreciation Pieces for Overseas Students (with D. J. May)  
Literary Comprehension and Appreciation Pieces (with D. J. May)

*Writing:*

An Elementary Refresher Course  
Elementary Composition Pieces  
Intermediate Refresher Course  
Intermediate Stories for Composition (Workbook and Companion) (with Prema Popkin)  
Picture Vocabulary (Pupil's and Teacher's Book)  
Vocabulary Tests and Exercises for Overseas Students (with R. D. S. Fielden)  
Outline Composition Book  
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**13. L. A. Hill Selected Articles on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language**

This collection of fifteen articles brings together many that have so far been available only in various journals, some of them published abroad. The articles collected are divided roughly into two, the first part of the book consisting of articles on the teaching of particular points of English grammar or pronunciation and the second part being concerned with more general aspects such as syllabus-writing, textbooks, and examinations. The collection should be of great interest not only to teachers but to all who are involved in any way with the teaching of English as a foreign language.

The author has for many years been concerned with the study and teaching of languages. His many books and articles on the teaching of English as a foreign language derive from his extensive experience in Indonesia, where he was professor of English and head of the University's Department of English for five years, and in India, where he was the British Council's Chief Education Officer for over two years. He now devotes his time to the preparation of teaching materials and the investigation of teaching methodology.



*Oxford University Press*